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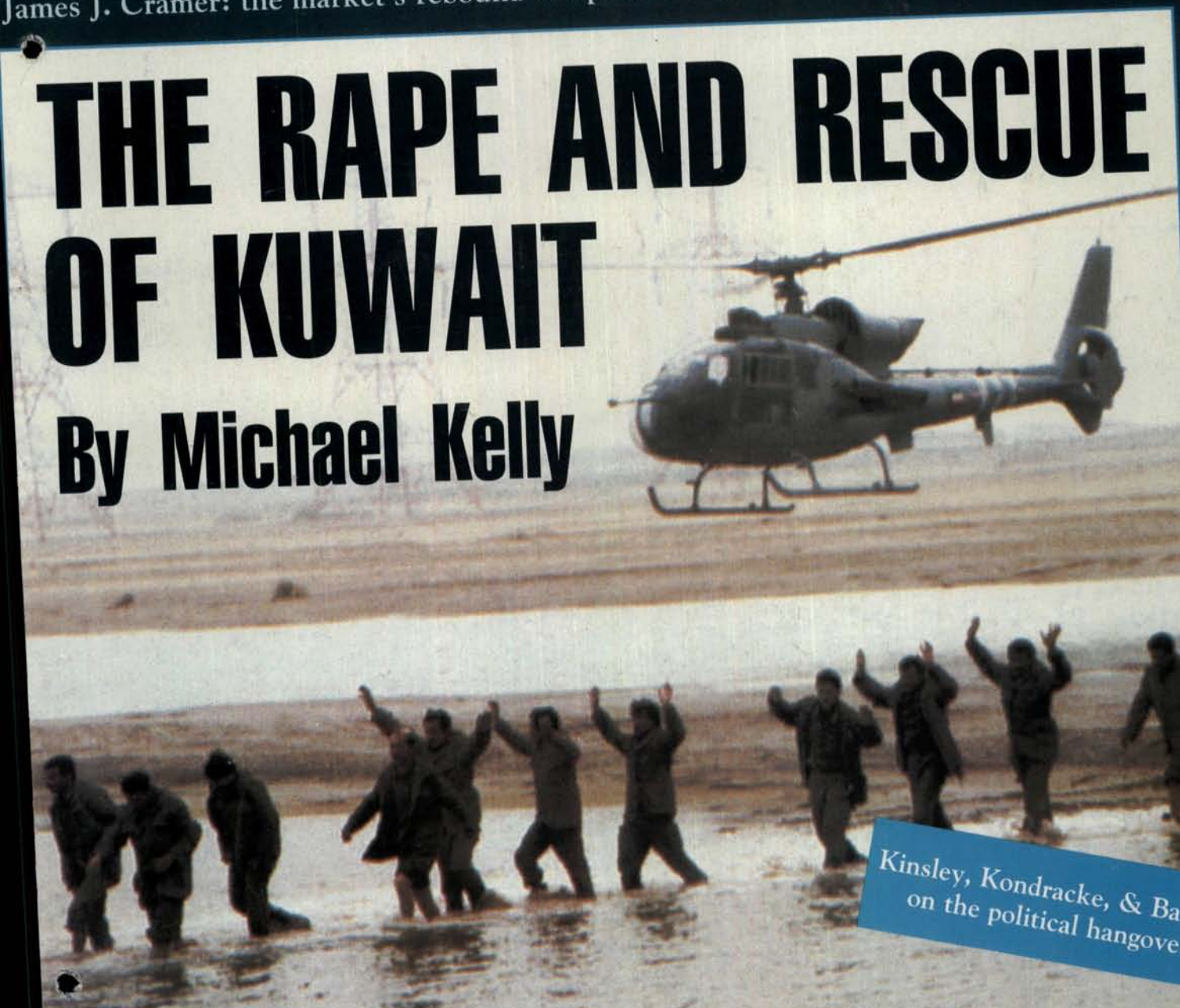

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on the political hangove

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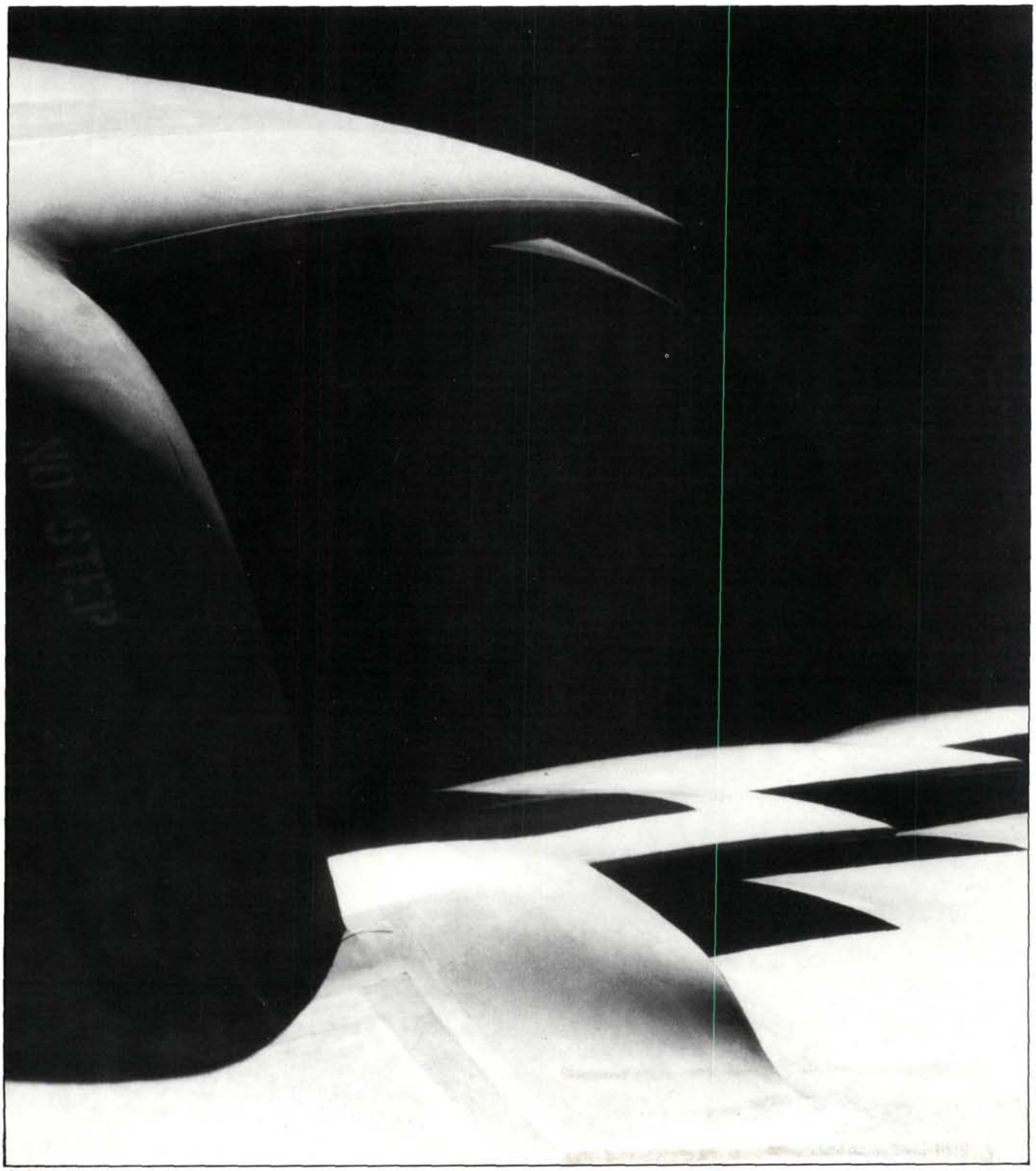

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Cover: Surrendering Iraqi troops march into Saudi Arabia, February 26, 1991. Photo by Greg English/Wide World Photos. Article on page 20.

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FROM WASHINGTON

Fear of '92

If your grandmother announced that she was going to spend her entire Social Security check on state lottery tickets, you'd tell her it was a dumb idea. If she did it anyway and won, you weren't wrong: it was still a dumb idea. But saying so would ring a bit hollow, and grandma would have earned the right to gloat.

President Bush warned halfheartedly against national gloating in his victory speech on February 28. But politically Republicans can't help but gloat. The widespread feeling is that—foolish or courageous—President Bush's winning gamble on war has put him beyond all competition for 1992. People who opposed the war, including most potential Democratic presidential candidates, are left with little to say.

It is annoying but politically useless to recall that Bush, against Democratic objections, was tilting toward Saddam at a time when one stern phone call would have made the whole business unnecessary. It is mere irony that Bush's newfound foreign policy "vision"—a world order based on international law and the United Nations—is straight out of the 1988 Dukakis campaign. One Democrat says the party ought to take the money that would ordinarily be spent on choosing and running a presidential candidate, and give it to the homeless instead.

The likely candidates seem to be in a similar mood. Four years ago there was already politico gridlock in Iowa and New Hampshire. All that has naturally been on hold for the past few months. But even before the war, the 1992 election was off to a slow start. The only leading Democrat so far even to hint he might run for president next year is Ye Olde George McGovern.

The complaint that 1992 political campaigns haven't started yet might justly elicit the response that there's no pleasing some people. After the 1988 election, the pundits were all moaning about the "permanent campaign": electioneering starts too early, lasts too long, and so on. That complaint, it seems, was fighting the last war. Now everyone looks at their watches and says, "Where are the candidates?"

Nevertheless, it's a good question. If the difficulty is that George Bush now looks like a fearless, macho, leaderlike kinda guy, while the Democrats look weak and craven, the reluctance of all the big-name Democrats to take the man on tends to confirm that sad impression. The best proof that some Democrat has world-class guts would be a willingness to challenge the former wimp while he stands at over 90 percent in the polls.

To be sure, next year's Democratic nominee will probably lose, and could well lose big. They usually do. But think of all the things that might change the landscape. To be grim, there is always the possibility that something could happen to Bush's health. Or the economy could decline catastrophically. Or there could be a horrendous Watergate-style political scandal. Hoping for bad news is unattractive and unhealthy, so consider as well another possibility, however unlikely: a charismatic Democrat might persuade voters to think about the future, not the past, and inspire them with a vision of a government they find preferable to the Republican one of the previous twelve years. Stranger things have happened. Don't ask me what.

The chance of any one of these developments occurring is small. Even adding these remote chances together may not get you anywhere near a likelihood of 51 percent. But adding them together surely gets you up to 20 or 30 percent. Is there really no Democrat who is willing to gamble on a one-in-five chance of being president of the United States? Sad, if so.

To maximize that chance, this Democrat has got to speak up soon. Now that Bush is such a towering figure, his Democratic challenger needs as much time as possible to become familiar to the public and plausible as a commander in chief. If his strategy is the positive one of hoping to inspire people rather than the negative one of waiting for national catastrophe, that also takes time. Ideological territory needs to be staked out before it is occupied by Bush's elite Republican guard. For the party's good, too, the sooner there is someone who can be identified as "leader" of the Democrats other than George Mitchell and Ron Brown, the better.

American politics is encumbered with a convention, not shared by other democratic systems, that reluctance to run is somehow becoming in a political candidate. The more one reveals an actual desire for elected office, the less one is considered worthy of it. Bill Bradley and Mario Cuomo have made careers by now of their preening hesitation about running for president—Bradley perennially honing himself to perfection, Cuomo parading endless tiresome doubts of his own worthiness. These gentlemen have just about persuaded me, at least, that their hesitation is justified. To counter the new giant-sized Bush will require some genuine enthusiasm. Perhaps I speak for many potential Democratic voters in saying that we are not interested in delicacies at this moment. We want to be thrown some raw meat.

Another defect of American politics is the difficulty of running for president more than once. If you go for the nomination and lose, you are often saddled with debts. If you get the nomination, your debts can be paid (and your fall campaign is federally funded). But if you lose the November election, the system—the media, the opposition, your own party—chews you up and spits you out. Michael Dukakis is held in absurd contempt for a man who got 46 percent of the vote against a virtual incumbent.

The Democratic panjandrums could do the political system and their own party a big favor by making clear now that anyone who runs against George Bush in 1992 and does respectably will be the acknowledged head of the party and presumptive nominee for 1996. That would immediately make next year's nomination more worth having. Even barring a 1992 upset, it would also give some Democratic "shadow president" four years to develop plausibility and gravitas. By 1996 he could seem more "presidential" than whatever fresh face the Republicans might nominate.

If the Democrats' strategy in '92 is going to be "change the subject"—and what other strategy is there?—that dictates nominating someone who supported Bush on the war. This won't eliminate the Bush advantage, of course, but it will help to neutralize the war as direct issue in the campaign. There are only two war supporters on the list of likelies: Al Gore and Chuck Robb. I won't reveal a preference, except to say that Robb strikes me as having no original thoughts or genuine principles. That may be a disadvantage, though I'm not entirely sure. TNR readers are familiar with Gore's traditional virtues. In addition to these, he has the advantage of being named Al, like so many other players in the Bush-created New World Order: Al Sabah, Al Anbari, and so on.

As for Democrats who opposed the war, I suggest the dignified mantra: "We were concerned above all not to sacrifice the lives of America's fighting men and women. We are delighted to have been proved wrong." Repeat after me: "We were concerned . . ." And give up that business about how we'll never know if the sanctions would have worked. It's profoundly true. Give it up anyway.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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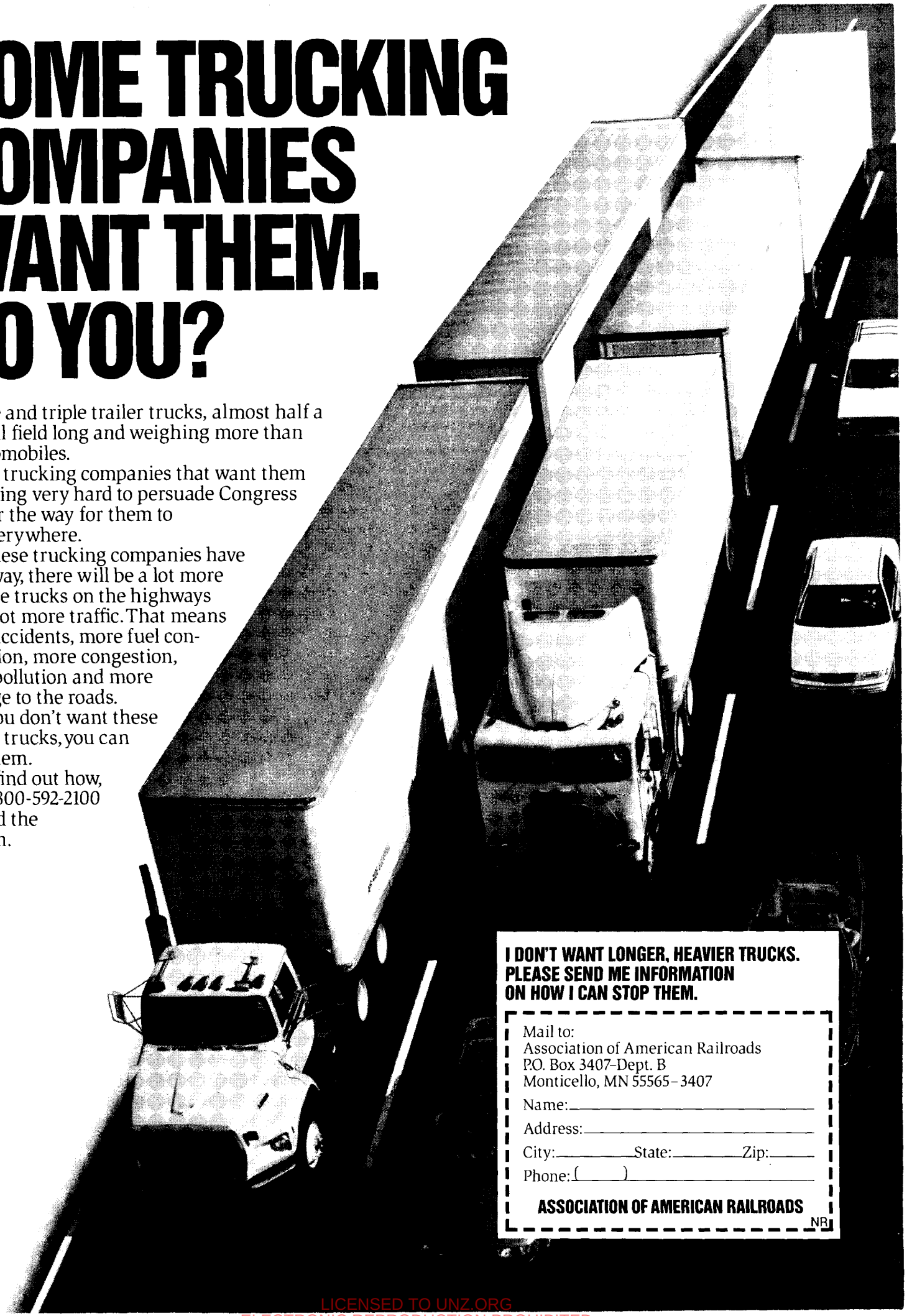

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Vox populi

To the editors:

Do not be so quick to criticize the lack of democracy in the Middle East ("War of Nerves," March 4). If the majority will of the Arab people were expressed, it is quite possible that Israel as we know it today would cease to exist.

Between 1925 and 1960 the United States and/or Great Britain conspired to overthrow or destabilize democratically oriented governments in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Iran. The rationales presented have included protection of economic investments (oil), World War II security concerns, and a perceived Soviet threat. We have historically supported traditional leaders who favor slow, measured change and from whom we do not perceive a threat, and we have opposed liberal or totalitarian leaders who promote rapid, chaotic change.

I believe the United States will continue to try to prevent the creation of true democracies because they may act against our perceived interests. Democracies in countries that have been historically emasculated can give rise to demagoguery very easily. Demagogues in the Arab world would call for a war with Israel, and probably for oil sanctions against America and the European powers. Many in the Arab and Islamic world are angry at Saddam Hussein because he made war with Iran and Kuwait rather than on Israel.

JOHN P. RITCHOTTE
Washington, D.C.

Bioethics

To the editors:

Alex Heard's article on Biosphere 2 ("Lost in Space," January 21) illustrates the first principle of prudent investigative journalism—seek evil in the safest possible place. Seek is perhaps too strong a word, however, since Mr. Heard never visited the Biosphere 2 project or met any of the people whose characters he flays so authoritatively.

Scores of bona fide journalists—including leading science reporters—who have seen Biosphere 2 and met staff members discovered issues to discuss such as sustainable resource management, wilderness preservation and restoration, air and water recycling. By contrast, what does Mr. Heard find significant? Twenty years ago, it seems, Biosphere 2's research director, John Allen, irritated a history professor who objected to his temper and supposed ability to influence others. Another staff member, a master's level electrical engineer, once (before he worked for Biosphere 2) lent a pistol to a sleight-of-hand stage magician who subsequently was injured while target shooting in a junk yard.

Mr. Heard objects to the project having (1) written letters warning ex-employees of a subcontractor that making false statements is actionable; (2) advised a Canadian current affairs program that certain statements possibly intended for broadcast were untrue; and (3) offered documentation in support of the facts. Statements of opinion—critical and supportive—are routinely included in hundreds of media reports on Biosphere 2. A literature search would easily indicate that no statement of opinion has ever been contested. But any individual, corporation, or project has the right to challenge false and erroneous representations of fact.

Why does a privately funded ecological research project deserve such a thorough trashing, particularly on the basis of this kind of hearsay? Perhaps an experimental biosphere and environmental research are safer targets than environmental polluters.

KATHLEEN A. DYHR
Oracle, Arizona

The writer is director of information systems at the Biosphere 2 project.

Network dues

To the editors:

In "Ad Nauseam" (February 18) James Workman worries that TV advertisers, skittish about the way their commercials might be perceived when aired in the midst of war coverage, could end up creating "the real censorship" in the Gulf war. But why is it apparently reasonable (if not necessarily desirable) for networks and their affiliates to truncate war coverage in the interest of preserving commercial profits, while it is somehow craven (if not downright sinister) for ad-

continued on page 45

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MARCH 25, 1991

THE DEAD

"Casualties were remarkably low," wrote one jubilant commentator in *The New York Times* last week, explaining the differences between the American war in the Gulf and the American war in Vietnam. He wrote imprecisely. *American* casualties were remarkably low. Iraqis, though, died by the scores of thousands, and mostly at American hands. Any attempt to pin down the number of Iraqi casualties, to find the exact number of dead and wounded, has so far been futile. Opponents of the war bandy about hellishly large numbers and supporters of the war bandy about heavenly small numbers. Neither Baghdad nor Washington has released official estimates. Still, we cannot hide behind the absence of the arithmetic.

Iraq has just suffered enormously. That is incontestable. The moral evaluation of Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and Desert Saber will not be complete until Americans speak candidly and carefully about *these* consequences of our actions, too. The United States has much to celebrate, but our celebration must not be humanly obtuse, as if we feared to acknowledge the full picture of the desert battlefield, as if the acknowledgment of the costs of our victory is itself a threat to our sense of purpose, or to the support that Americans are showing for our reasons for fighting, and our methods of fighting, this war.

For a rudimentary analysis, let us break down the problem into civilian casualties and military casualties. About civilian casualties in Baghdad, we know almost nothing. We must assume, of course, that there are dead and wounded—collateral damage, in the anesthetizing language of the planners. And yet the fact that we know nothing is itself evidence to support the view, or the hope, that civilian casualties in Baghdad were not very great. It is hard to believe that Saddam would have refrained from making immediate and vivid use of whatever images of slaughtered innocents he could adduce. Indeed, when the United States bombed the bunker in Baghdad, and discovered to its obviously sincere horror that the structure held hundreds of women and children, reporters in all the media were hospitably rushed to the scene. Propaganda was one of Saddam's most critical weapons in this war, particularly propaganda that would inflame Arabs and thereby sunder the coalition of Americans and Arabs arrayed against him. If we were not tormented with pictures of carnage in Baghdad, it may be because there was not much carnage in Baghdad.

There are no such things as perfectly surgical strikes. And yet it seems safe to say that this war was the first war in which we saw the moral utility of the technology of precision guidance. The more precisely you target a weapon, the less destructive the weapon has to be. The American air strikes against Baghdad seem to have been characterized by such a micro-proportionality of means to ends. We know less about the American strikes at nuclear, chemical, and biological production facilities around the country; but if it seems safe to assume that civilians were killed in those strikes, it also seems safe to assume that Saddam had "collocated" civilians, that is, held civilians hostage, at those targets. It is certainly the case that the United States did not target residential areas or civilian centers. (There are those, some of them supporters of the war, who argue that we destroyed too much of Baghdad's infrastructure, that we should have spared more power lines and the like, and thereby spared Baghdad some of its present hardship; but it is impossible to fight a war without diminishing the enemy's communications, and in any event no proof has been brought forward that those attacks were costly in lives.) It is ironic that some of the people who are certain of massive civilian casualties are the same people who complain about the "Nintendo war," about the eerie, dehumanizing, video-game quality of the air campaign. Either the air campaign was chillingly precise or it wasn't.

About Iraqi military casualties, however, Americans should pause. Again, there are no official figures, but the military analyst Trevor N. Dupuy estimates that there were 100,000 to 150,000 Iraqi military casualties, including 25,000 to 50,000 deaths. Those are grim numbers. They reflect the magnitude of the American effort, and the strategy that guided it. The United States liberated Kuwait and destroyed the military might of Saddam Hussein by applying overwhelming force. Our ground campaign was brilliant, but also blunt. We did what General

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Colin Powell promised we would do: we isolated the Iraqi army and then we killed it.

The extraordinary surrender with which the Iraqi troops met the American troops can be explained in two ways. Either Saddam's soldiers began the war defeated or they ended the war defeated. That is, they folded either because they were poor slobs terrorized by their commanders, with nothing to fight for, who welcomed the Americans as their own liberators, too; or because they were persuaded by American force that they had met their match, and concluded that this time it was not in their interest or in their power to inflict the kind of punishment that they had inflicted so proudly on Iranian troops for most of a decade. It is impossible to know which explanation is the right one. But the issue is not only analytical. For the American high command, it was also practical; and it would have been the height of irresponsibility, a dereliction of his duty, for General Norman Schwarzkopf to premise his plans on the belief that the Iraqi army would not fight, that it had no wish to win the war or to do substantial damage to the coalition forces. In the event, the land war was a walkover. But it did not have to be one. The Republican Guards were, after all, one of the most feared forces in recent times. Their "softening up" from the air was not an act of unjustifiable cruelty.

How, then, should Americans think, in the middle of all their good feeling, about those 25,000 to 50,000 Iraqi soldiers? For a start, it is worth reminding ourselves, though not for the purpose of avoiding the question, that the moral status of soldiers in war is different than the moral status of civilians in war. But there is a more fundamental consideration that must be entered into the discussion, which goes to the heart of the American character. It is that there is a difference between being right and being innocent. The Arab and American and European forces that destroyed the power of Saddam were right, but they were not innocent. There are just wars and there are unjust wars, but no war, just or unjust, can be fought without getting blood on the hands.

In the discussion of American means, it is important not to lose sight of American ends. Saddam may look pathetic now, but that is because we have made him pathetic. Before this war he was the figure in the contemporary world who most perfectly combined the appetite for mass destruction with the tools for mass destruction. Since he rose to power, he did nothing but invade his neighbors. (The first invasion lasted an unexpected eight years.) He was the first strongman about whose willingness to use the chemical weapons he had acquired there was no need to speculate. He was a man dead to death, an expansionist completely indifferent to the stupefying human costs of his efforts to expand. If the people of Iraq are now looking for a reason for what has happened to their state and their society, they should look to Baghdad, not to Washington. It was Saddam who invited Iraq's ruin. It was he who preferred delusions of Mesopotamian (and in the eleventh hour, Muslim) grandeur to the safety and the prosperity of his people.

So let us be frank with ourselves. Away with the illusion of American innocence. There *were* casualties. We are responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqi soldiers. But we are also responsible for the end of Saddam's endless war, for the elimination of the most threatening and the most used arsenal in the developing world, for the prospect of a new peace in the recalcitrant region. Our actions should be subjected to the scrutiny of our consciences. We believe that they will withstand such scrutiny. The United States and its allies have eliminated an evil. Not all evil, just one evil; but quite a one it was.

NOTEBOOK

PHONE PHUN: Michael Kinsley (reluctantly) argues in this week's TRB column that for the Democrats to maximize their chances in next year's presidential election, they would be well advised to nominate someone who supported the use of force in the Persian Gulf. What do you think? You can register your opinion by calling our Sound Off line, 1-900-726-6671. The results will be reported in this space two weeks hence.

DENNIS THE MENACE: We need hardly add our voice to the chorus attacking the Senate Ethics Committee for its craven verdict in the Keating Five case. But what really burns is the exoneration of Dennis DeConcini. By any standard, DeConcini's lapses were as severe as Alan Cranston's, if not worse. Cranston took more of Charles Keating's money, but DeConcini fought more ruthlessly on his behalf. DeConcini led the efforts to lean on federal regulators. The meetings organized to intimidate them were held in his office. When John McCain decided to quit lobbying for Lincoln Savings and Loan, he tendered his resignation to DeConcini—not to Keating. DeConcini was the driving force behind the appointment of Keating stooge Lee Henkel to the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. Along with Cranston, DeConcini continued lobbying long after knowing that Keating was the target of a criminal investigation. During the hearings DeConcini lobbied the Ethics Committee just as hard, parading his infant granddaughter before the cameras. At no point did he betray even an iota of shame. That's also the case, apparently, with the committee.

STALINOIDS IN SPACE: Naming the craters on Venus after women writers strikes us as a nice convention. Sappho, Emily Dickinson, Willa Cather, and Virginia Woolf, and many of the others so honored would even merit rings of Saturn or moons of Jupiter. But did the U.S. Geological Survey have to name one after Lillian Hellman? Are there really no anonymous black holes left?

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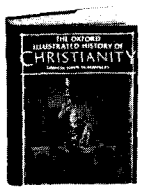

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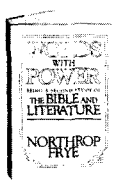

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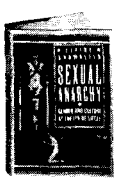

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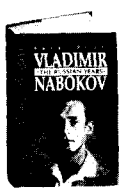

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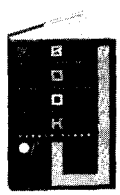

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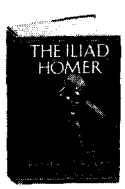

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tion . . . to the early use of military force by the US against Iraq. I share your concerns. On January 11, I voted in favor of a resolution that would have insisted that economic sanctions be given more time to work and against a resolution giving the president the immediate authority to go to war."

—letter from Senator John Kerry to Wallace Carter of Newton Centre, Massachusetts, dated January 22

"Thank you very much for contacting me to express your support for the actions of President Bush in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. From the outset of the invasion, I have strongly and unequivocally supported President Bush's response to the crisis and the policy goals he has established with our military deployment in the Persian Gulf."

—Senator Kerry to Wallace Carter, January 31 ●

The Democrats and the war.

PARTY POOPER

By Morton Kondracke

On the surface the Democratic Party's political situation after the Gulf war looks pretty bad. Beneath the surface it looks even worse. Party leaders deny they were wrong to oppose the war, say it's negative campaigning for Republicans to mention how people voted, and want to redirect the country's attention to domestic problems. The trouble is, the Democrats are split even on domestic policy. Put it all together and the party could well be out of power for the rest of this century.

The poll figures could hardly look worse. Bush's overall popularity is about 90 percent; 65 percent of the American people believe that the country is "on the right track"; Gallup shows Bush running ahead of a hypothetical Democratic rival by 65 percent to 22 percent; and the Republicans lead the Democrats by 45 to 28 percent on keeping the country safe (the biggest gap since 1964, when Democrats led Goldwater Republicans 45 to 22 percent). Even on keeping the country prosperous, the Republicans lead, 51 to 27 percent.

Then there is the ammunition the Democrats handed the Republicans in the debate over whether to go to war. Every plausible Democratic presidential candidate opposed war except for Senator Albert Gore Jr. of Tennessee, who did a fair amount of public handwringing before supporting Bush. The Republicans have videotape on all that—including assertions after the war by Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell and Armed Services Chairman Sam Nunn that "we'll never know" whether economic sanctions would have worked to liberate Kuwait, in spite of the fact that it took five weeks of non-stop bombing and the onset of a ground war for Saddam Hussein even to consider the idea. At that, the Democrats were aiming at nothing more than an Iraqi withdrawal; Bush accomplished the greater mission of demolishing Iraq's offensive military potential. Senator Bob Kerrey is on tape opposing the original deployment of U.S. forces to the Gulf and accusing President Bush of resembling "a little league football coach more than a commander in chief" in threatening Iraq with war. And Richard Gephardt is there saying that Congress could cut off funds for a war if Bush started it without congressional approval.

The Republicans also have videotape of senators up for re-election (six of whom were elected in 1986 with margins of less than five percent of the vote), including Terry Sanford of North Carolina, who described the Gulf conflict as "the most unnecessary war in the history of this nation," and Ernest Hollings of South Carolina, who said that "within six months, every fundamentalist mullah, every Arab nationalist, will say, 'the United States came here and invaded this Third World country for oil. . . .' And, face it, they will be speaking the truth!" Polls show a twelve-point drop in Hollings's approval rating in South Carolina (to 44 percent) and a twenty-point drop (to 38 percent) for Sanford in North Carolina.

What's worse, the Democrats seem to have learned nothing from the Gulf war about one of their basic political liabilities: the country does not trust them to use force, if necessary, to protect the national interest. Since the war, not one national Democratic officeholder has said that Bush was right and he or she was wrong. (California Senate candidate Dianne Feinstein did, and she was met with stunned silence at the party's state convention.) Party chairman Ron Brown said on CNN (echoing any number of other leaders) that overwhelming Democratic votes against Bush policy in January were "about timing, not on whether to go to war," when in fact a Democratic victory would have forced the United States to stand down from the United Nations' January 15 deadline and, most likely, to withdraw troops from the Gulf area.

Brown also says that "it's wrong to make this a partisan issue. It's the lowest form of politics. It demeans the valor of the troops and it divides the country when we should be united." The Democrats want credit for "supporting the troops" and for not opposing the war once it started. One Democrat, Representative Frank McCloskey, voted against Bush, then got one of the largest flags in the country shipped in from Indiana and displayed on the Mall in Washington. Other Democrats claim credit for backing weapons systems that worked and for favoring sanctions against Saddam Hussein when Bush, Republican chairman (and former agriculture secretary) Clayton Yeutter, and Senate Republican campaign chairman Phil Gramm were still practicing "appeasement."

The Democrats are entitled to investigate Bush poli-

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cy prior to Saddam's August 2 invasion. But this will not alter the fundamental fact that, when the chips were down, the Republicans did what had to be done and the Democrats were, as ever, force-averse.

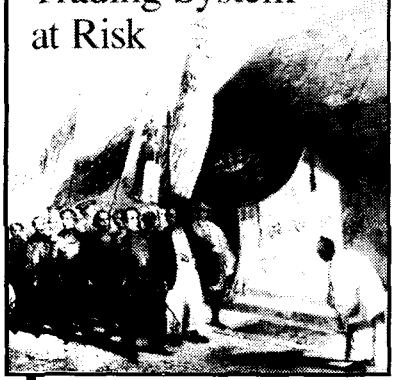
According to Democratic political analyst William Galston, "It's been obvious for a long time that Democrats lose on the foreign-policy/defense issue. The inability of the party's major leaders and its liberal fundamentalists to learn this lesson means that we will suffer political defeat for as far as the eye can see." Galston thinks the only answer is for Democrats to find totally new leaders to replace those who "had their dominant policy outlook hardwired in twenty years ago" by Vietnam. "To change would be to admit a fundamental error," he said. "It would require the moral reconstruction of the party and almost all of its key individuals." As Galston notes, almost all of the party's foreign policy gurus (except for Representatives Les Aspin and Stephen Solarz) opposed the Bush policy, in spite of the fact that Bush satisfied every one of the criteria laid down by former Senator Gary Hart and others as prerequisites for war, including public and international backing and the failure of diplomacy to accomplish results.

At a more practical level, according to Democratic Senator Joseph Lieberman, who voted with Bush, the danger to the party is that its elected officials were "out of touch with the vast majority of rank-and-file Democrats, who knew that this war was just and necessary." Polls indicate that support for Bush policy among Democrats was 70 percent, and among Republicans, 90 percent. But the groups that most actively opposed the war—left-wing unions, civil rights leaders, the peace movement, the National Organization for Women, and some environmental groups—still hold disproportionate sway over the Democratic nominating process. One Democratic constituency that favored the war was organized American Jewry, which Democrats will try to hold by fighting Bush administration pressure on Israel to make unwelcome concessions to the Arabs.

Instead of confronting their fundamental problems, the Democrats want to shift national attention as quickly as possible to domestic issues. It's understandable. Bush's approval ratings on economics are forty points lower than they are on foreign policy, albeit still a majority. Also, there are deep flaws in the nation's domestic life that the Democrats can exploit: the recession, public deficits and private debt, the underclass, rotting infrastructure, failing schools, and a stagnant living standard for the lower middle class. Prior to the war, with the nation entering a recession, Gallup found basic public satisfaction at around 30 percent, which Democrats regard as the level to which the public will return once the Gulf war high wears off. The Democrats want to portray Bush as being attentive to foreign policy but negligent of domestic concerns. There's truth in this, of course. (See "War Dividend" by Fred Barnes, page 12.) When Margaret Thatcher won the

JAGDISH BHAGWATI

The World Trading System at Risk



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Falklands War, she used her prestige to force through a tough domestic agenda. Bush doesn't have one.

But the Democrats don't have one either. They have two, which Galston dubs the "recentralizer" and "decentralizer" schools: the 1991 update of Walter Mondale's 1984 interest-group dinosaurs and Gary Hart's 1984 "new ideas" Atari liberals. The first group has as its theorists Keynesian economists Jeff Faux and Gar Alperovitz, who want to spend gobs of federal money on infrastructure, health, and education, and restore prosperity through industrial policy, protectionism, and federal economic planning. The newly formed Coalition for Democratic Values, headed by Senator Howard Metzenbaum, is the school's political rallying point, and its ideal presidential candidate would be Mario Cuomo. Jesse Jackson presumably would favor similar economic policies.

The "decentralizers" are spearheaded by the Democratic Leadership Council and its think tank, the Progressive Policy Institute, plus theorist David Osborne. Nunn is a key figure in the DLC, along with Lieberman. The decentralizers emphasize state-level experimentation and "empowerment" strategies such as apprenticeship programs for the poor and parental choice in education. This group's ideal standard-bearer would be Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, who said after the fact that he would have voted with Bush on the war, or Senator Chuck Robb, who did vote with the president.

As Jonathan Rauch wrote in the January 26 *National Journal*, Gephardt is the foremost bridge candidate between the two schools. He is pushing an agenda that includes an oil import fee, trade sanctions against Japan, more spending on energy research, corporate and high-income tax increases, and grants to states that achieve education goals. Mitchell, meanwhile, backs a reduced version of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan's proposal to cut Social Security taxes for the middle class.

Conflict between the two Democratic schools could produce some creative proposals, although it probably cannot produce an election-winning consensus by 1992. And neither group deals with the most crucial single problem facing America: lagging private saving and investment. Moynihan's tax cut might stimulate consumption and boost the economy, but it will have to be paid for in higher taxes on the rich, who are more apt to invest than those below them on the income scale.

Meanwhile, the Bush White House can't be expected to sit idle while Democrats slam them on the domestic front. Indeed, the administration has in the wings modest alternatives to various Democratic ideas, arguing that it's protecting the country from taxers and spenders. It already has plans to cut defense to 3.75 percent of GNP by 1995, and to means-test Medicare and other entitlement programs (thereby undercutting the Democratic "fairness" argument).

So the Democrats are left with little more than the prospect that the recession will plunge into a depression. That's a sorry state for a party to be in. ●

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

WAR DIVIDEND

By Fred Barnes

President Bush's speech to veterans on March 4 ("it's a time to be proud"), the address to Congress on March 6, and the White House ceremony on March 7 to award the Medal of Freedom to Margaret Thatcher are just the beginning. On March 14 it's off to Canada to chat with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, then quickly to Martinique to talk about the Middle East with French President François Mitterrand. Shortly thereafter Bush will confer with British Prime Minister John Major about the war, the Middle East, etc. "We'll also have meetings with [German Chancellor Helmut] Kohl and [Italian Prime Minister Giulio] Andreotti and God knows who else," says a senior White House adviser. Next, a trip by Bush to the Middle East is "probably in the works."

Bush has a new role—War President, Part II—and he intends to play it to the hilt. With the fighting over, Democrats and some Republicans (even a few administration officials) are eager for Bush to concentrate on domestic policy. Not a chance. "Bush had two big deals in 1990, the budget deal and the Persian Gulf," says a presidential aide. "Which one would you want to live through again?" The answer is obvious. Bush is skillful in foreign and defense policy, clumsy in domestic. His popularity soars when he dwells on national security matters, dips when he deals with domestic issues. "We should just have twenty-one months of Gulf war follow-up," says a White House official. Until Election Day 1992, the strategy is to "keep the war alive."

On February 27, the day before the war ended, Bush's political advisers thrashed out the foreign/domestic question in a meeting in the office of John Sununu, the White House chief of staff. There wasn't much thrashing. Everyone—Sununu, Republican chairman Clayton Yeutter, pollster Robert Teeter, media consultant Roger Ailes, strategist Charles Black, Quayle adviser William Kristol—agreed Bush should downplay his domestic agenda indefinitely. Richard Darman, as mastermind of Bush domestic policy, might be expected to balk at this. But he went along enthusiastically at the meeting. His chief interest, as budget director, is in protecting the budget agreement forged last year. Emphasis on domestic initiatives puts it in jeopardy.

What emerged from the meeting was the idea of "solidifying the capital" that Bush built up during the Gulf crisis. "We have the capacity to solidify the president's capital so we can succeed on both the domestic and

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foreign policy agendas," says a senior official. That requires ignoring domestic issues for the time being. "Now we've got to let the public know that the result [in the war] was not an accident," the official says. Bush doesn't have to claim personal credit. "It's not a time to brag," he told leaders of veterans' organizations. In fact, Bush's job is to give credit to everyone else. It's up to everyone else to give credit (much of which he deserves) to him. Events, including ceremonies and parades, will tend to point up his central role.

Both Bush and the Sununu group have concluded that there may be domestic spillover from the war sometime, strengthening the president's hand with Congress. But it hasn't happened yet. Nor is the public demanding that Bush switch to domestic issues. "The pressure to go domestic comes from Cabinet agencies who want to get back in the game," says a White House official. Labor Secretary Lynn Martin and Louis Sullivan, the secretary of health and human services, wish to play up new programs. Some White House domestic policy advisers think Bush should press his "empowerment" agenda. (Bush has already dropped the word "empowerment" because Sununu and Darman dislike it.) Housing Secretary Jack Kemp would like Bush to push for quick passage of a capital gains tax cut. All these are non-starters at the postwar White House.

There's another part to "solidifying the capital": pillorying Democrats. The White House, indeed, the entire Republican Party, wants Democrats to suffer for opposing Bush's decision to go to war. "We need to cement that vote as *the* vote," says a Bush aide. Again, Bush isn't the one to do the dirty work. He stays "a mile above all this," the aide adds. Yeutter and congressional Republicans, especially House GOP Whip Newt Gingrich, have the assignment. Sununu has a backhanded way of joining in. "I think the Democrats are afraid that it may be a productive issue" for Republicans, he said on CNN's "Evans and Novak." "It will not be an issue from the White House," he noted piously. And he won't tell Republican candidates to raise it. Of course they'll surely raise it on their own, he added.

Teeter, the Bush pollster, believes that public expectations play into Bush's hands. "Most people think there's a lot of foreign policy work to be done now," he says. At his first postwar press conference on March 1, Bush outlined an ambitious set of goals just for the Middle East. Besides rebuilding Kuwait, he wants to deal with the Israeli-Palestinian issue, the "Lebanon question," and the matter of bringing Iraq back "into the family of nations." Then there's the job of bringing American troops home. They'll be returning in "a steady stream over six months," an official says. "There are going to be parades all over the country we can plug into, if we want to." Some troops are bound to find their way to the White House for medal ceremonies. General Schwarzkopf will do a drop-by.

If all else fails, events can be contrived, such as awarding a fifth star to Schwarzkopf and General Colin Powell. As Bush boned up before his press conference, he was told he might be asked about that. "What do you mean, a fifth star?" he asked. "Can I do that?" An aide responded, "Basically you can do what you want." Bush seemed disinclined to promote Powell and Schwarzkopf, much as he likes them. But at the press conference he ducked the question. "I think that's a little early to answer," he said. Later, when Democrats are pounding him on domestic issues, he'll have the option of pinning fifth stars on the Desert Storm heroes in a White House ceremony.

Bush isn't blotting out domestic issues altogether. On the advice of Teeter, whose political counsel carries enormous weight with Bush, the president will take care to "inoculate" himself on some. He'll pay enough attention to health care, the environment, crime, and education so that he can't be accused of neglecting them completely. In his first postwar trip outside Washington, Bush goes to Cleveland on March 12 to tout efforts to reduce infant mortality. Mostly, though, he'll pay lip service. In his nine-minute speech to veterans, he devoted a few seconds to domestic issues. "Much work remains to be done on the domestic scene," he said. "We've got to tackle that with a new determination." Only not now.

The biggest phobia at the White House is rich versus poor, the issue Democrats are flagging. It's not an issue that threatens Bush's re-election. But Bush finds it unpleasant when Democrats denounce him as the champion of the wealthy. By promoting a capital gains tax cut last year, "we gave them a hammer to hit us with," says a senior Bush adviser. That won't be repeated in 1991. The only rich/poor issue Bush intends to broach is Kuwait and the rest of the Arab world. ●

The Palestinians defeat themselves.

WORST ENEMY

By Martin Peretz

Except when the West chooses to ignore the brutality of the Arab world (which it chooses to do often), it is periodically shocked by the grisly spectacles that are routine in the politics of Islam. And not only innocents are appalled. Men like General Norman Schwarzkopf, who know from long experience in war that cruelty may be at one and the same time cultural habit and military doctrine, are incredulous. "Unspeakable atrocities" is what he called the deeds of the Iraqis in Kuwait. Of those who committed them he said, "They're not a part of the same human race—the people that did that—that the rest of us are."

It's perhaps too comforting a thought that one can so easily separate oneself from barbarians, but it is good to see that the U.S. commander has the sensibility

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to draw lines that actually constrain. And constrain they did. The venture fought under Schwarzkopf's and George Bush's supervision more scrupulously avoided civilian casualties than any other armed campaign in history. What Schwarzkopf thought "unspeakable" was also for the American forces unthinkable.

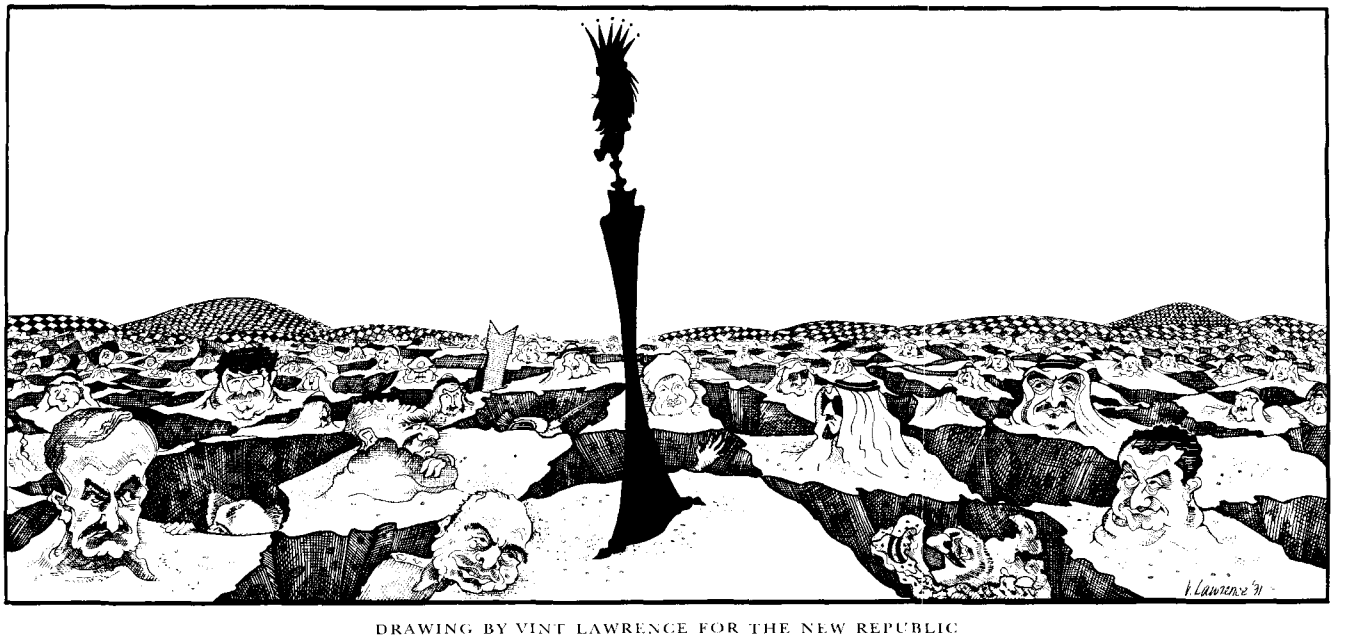
As the narrative of the Iraqi occupation is retrieved from the morgues and mass graves of Kuwait, it will become clearer just how little evil was actually forbidden to the holy warriors. Already the record is so laden with human suffering that one wants to forget how many Democratic politicians worried more about allowing Saddam to save face than they did about the lives of his victims. But those who preferred sanctions to war may yet take plausible, if not very convincing, refuge in ignorance; and refuge in forgetfulness of the war the Baath waged, with chemical weapons, against Iranians and Kurds.

The Arab leaders in Baghdad's camp, however, have no such excuses; and their publics demand none. The butchery inflicted on Kuwait was precisely what they expected. Indeed, it was what so excited those who took to the streets in support of Iraq in various Arab capitals. In this part of the world governments and movements are not a guard against bestiality, but its provocateur. Indeed, a war that does not take frenzied revenge for grievances real and imagined is hardly deemed a war at all.

King Hussein of Jordan is a case in point. Americans were surprised by the king's enthusiasm for his neighbor's rapacity, and indeed it was something of a deviation from his usual posture of interlocutor for the rich Arabs who fuel his palace and feed his troops. Kings don't usually traffic in disorder; they don't want subjects to get bad ideas. But this king had historic resentments of his own: his family, which aspired to the stewardship of Mecca and Medina, has always bristled at being relegated to a backwater like Amman. And the emoluments that have come to him from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf were perpetual reminders of his mendicant status among the royals. When last he went, cup in hand, to Kuwait, the Emir told him that Jordan would have to stop living beyond its means. Well-spoken though he is, Hussein is not immune to vengeance.

Hussein had lost the West Bank to Israel when Gamal Abdel Nasser seduced him into a war that was already lost. It was the same pan-Arab fantasy that enticed the king in 1990, except this time all that Saddam wanted was words. It was a cheap price, the last remaining Hashemite must have told himself, and it would play well with the Palestinians who would otherwise do what they have wanted to do for decades—ship him off to Switzerland for a reunion with his bank accounts. Of course, it could have turned out far worse. The Palestinians might not have been satisfied by anything less than a regicide like the one that claimed Hussein's cousins in Iraq in 1958. The king, then, can count himself lucky; he is still on his throne.

His throne, however, is shaky. Even though he joined the Palestinians of Jordan in their anticipation of an Iraqi victory, he has not acquired their loyalty, insofar as their loyalty can ever be acquired. The Palestinians had come to believe, in the way that they often believe the unbelievable, that Saddam Hussein would, in Saddam's own words, "fry half of Israel" for them—and redistribute the wealth of the Arabs besides. He did neither. The PLO's old patrons—the oil states—will give it nothing. In Lebanon, where the Palestinians are still hated for the dictatorship they ran there from 1976 to 1982, the government can't do much. But it can impede the PLO from firing rockets at Israel, and it has begun to do so, doubtless at the command of Hafez Assad. Squeezed on all sides and true to their habit of courting disaster, the Palestinians might yet gamble their last safe haven in Jordan and rebel. This is a battle, though, that the king—or at least his indigenous Bedouin East Bank army—would win. Knowing that the migrant PLO would give no quarter, the army would give no quarter either. And the fact is, the army has the guns.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

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It is possible, of course, that the Palestinians won't rush into their fated revolt against the Hashemites. Some in the West Bank and Gaza, according to an account by Sabra Chartrand in *The New York Times*, even seem to believe that Iraq won the war. As one Palestinian put it, "We are proud of Saddam for having humiliated President Bush and putting him in his place." And another: Saddam "could retake Kuwait in a day." Others, encouraged in their delusions by the empire-nostalgic François Mitterrand, may imagine that Saddam has put the Palestinian question decisively on the world's agenda. Of course, if the Palestinians in the occupied territories were to come forward and say that they were willing to negotiate for autonomy on the basis of the 1978 Camp David agreements, they'd have Israel trapped in its own treaty obligations. But the Israeli right has nothing to fear: the Palestinians will for once eschew their habit of accepting today what they could have had years ago. The prudent among them are now saying that they can't negotiate from weakness. They do not mention how long it will be before they can negotiate from strength.

Despite the threat by its delegate in the territories to plunge the region into instability, the PLO holds virtually no cards. In fact, King Hussein seems already to have offered himself as the alternative negotiator for the Palestinians with Israel—he who only the day before yesterday had washed his hands of the territories. More to the point, none of the states that financed the PLO infrastructure and were its tribunes in international councils will now lift a finger for the Palestinians. Some may make perfunctory rhetorical claims in behalf of "Palestine," but they will do so purely to propitiate their own restive mobs.

If there is any succor for the Palestinians it will have to come from Israel itself. But Israel is not much in the mood to be either generous or forgiving. There was linkage between the Gulf war and Israel's relations with its neighbors. But the linkage was the opposite of what the Arabs and most of the American pundits expected. The Israelis, especially dovish Israelis, realized how perilous it would have been if the territories were governed by a hostile state, aligned, for example, with Iraq. The prospect of chemical and biological arsenals in the foothills of Jerusalem or eight miles from Tel Aviv is not comforting. Tanks on the western side of the Jordan are more dangerous than tanks on the other side. For all these strategic reasons, the doves are now in retreat. The Labor Party, like the Democratic Party here, is contemplating long years in the wilderness. But most of all what has so jaundiced the Israeli body politic is the palpable pathology of the Palestinian body politic.

What do the Palestinians make of the barbaric treatment by Iraq of the Kuwaitis who, whatever their vanities, had welcomed the Palestinians into their midst and allowed them to become incredibly rich? Listen carefully to the Palestinians on television; they answer in three parts. First, the barbarism didn't happen. Second, the media exaggerate the barbarism. Third, the Kuwaitis deserved whatever they got. The media have long patronized Palestinian representatives by ignoring their frequent and willful denial of the truth. But the world gave undivided attention to what happened in Kuwait and to the complicity of the Palestinians in the frenzy that accompanied it. The evidence was, as the Arabs say, *mahdura*. It was well-attended. It could not be denied. The only explanation for the Palestinians' continued refusal to face the truth is that they live in a trance.

Why did the Palestinians resident in Kuwait join in the Iraqi debauch? Maybe they thought no one would notice. It is true that they were enthralled with Saddam. He did say, after all, that he had done it all for the sake of Palestine, or, at least, that's what he said after the fact. But before he surrendered he had already forgotten Palestine. In the meantime the Palestinians had been party to the looting spree. The revenge taken on them by the returning Kuwaitis will be moderated—as Margaret Tutwiler's recent appeal for restraint evidenced—only by the Americans. But it will not, alas, be entirely prevented. Kuwaitis do not only feel betrayed by the Palestinians; they *were* betrayed by the Palestinians. They read what the supine Palestinian intellectuals penned in praise of Saddam. They saw the placards and the mobs on CNN. It was all *mahdura*. The fortunate Palestinians will be the ones whom the Kuwaitis expel.

As we shudder at these convulsions in the Arab world, we remember, of course, that there is more than one Arab world, though none is truly democratic or even constitutional; and none is really modernizing either. This war was waged on behalf of those Arab societies where it is assumed that people may die in their beds, where people are not awakened in the night and taken away only to disappear. The difference between such societies and one ruled by the Baath and exalted by the Palestinians is the difference between nascent decencies and entrenched savagery. It is a difference glimpsed in political theory. But in the lives of human beings it is the difference between good and evil, hope and terror. The United States and its allies need not tremble that they require further exertions to vindicate their stay in the Gulf. Their rout of Iraq is its own ethical reward.

It would be good, of course, if the conflict between Israel and the Arab states were to be pacified, if the Israelis and the Palestinians could find a less tense way of living side by side in cramped space. Were armed Arab states to come to terms with Israel, it's quite likely that Israel would be less vexed and hexed by ways of coming to terms with Palestinians. James Baker might productively explore the possibilities on his Middle East tour, and after. But if he turns this modest undertaking into a major peace initiative, he will only rouse the passions now fatigued by the recent defeat. Worse than that, he will embarrass our Arab allies into taking positions from which they have just and only tentatively begun to free themselves.

The administration is getting much advice about how and why it must now satisfy the Palestinian grievance. This advice comes mostly, it should be remem-

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bered, from those who also wanted the Iraqi grievance appeased. They were wrong then, and they are wrong now. In any case, what they mean by arguing that we must vindicate the American intervention is that we must somehow compensate for the American intervention, that we must acquit ourselves of some wrong. And that's exactly how many of the Arabs would read an effort in this vein. It would surely—and fatally—send the wrong message. ●

A market crash that never came.

SHORTED OUT

By James J. Cramer

A few weeks and 500 Dow Jones points ago, I sat down for brunch with a group of my New York contemporaries: a stock and commodities broker, a handful of lawyers, a budding real estate magnate, and an editor. As these wealthy, intelligent individuals talked, a gloom shrouded every topic. The table was nearly unanimous about how bitter and protracted the Gulf war would be. The editor questioned whether any of our high-tech weapons would work, doubted our generals' plans, and chided our soldiers' abilities to meet the vaunted Republican Guards.

A sullen prognosis, but not as bearish as the economic outlook delivered by the New York builder, who said he could not name a bank or a developer not in trouble or contemplating bankruptcy. Surely all involved in real estate would succumb, he insisted. The lawyers spoke eloquently about how poorly their clients were faring, particularly those with Japanese competitors. But no one was nearly as negative as the stockbroker. Not only was his own industry going down the tubes, so were all the industries his firm analyzed. He worried about his ability to survive, considering the low equity volume.

As the meal drew to a close, the stock market loomed larger in the conversation. As befitted the pessimism dripping from the table, only one strategy merited attention: short-selling. People sell stocks short when they believe the market will fall. If someone sells short 1,000 shares of IBM at 130, he hopes to buy it back, or "cover," at lower prices. If IBM subsequently declines to, say, 100, and the short-seller buys his 1,000 shares back, he's made $30,000 realizing his negative views.

The bearish broker spoke fervently about his big bet against Wells Fargo, the giant California bank then trading at around 45. "They've got so many bad loans they aren't even owning up to half of them," he stated knowingly. The New York developer laughed—*he* knew banks better: "Citicorp at 12 is a lay-up short," he said. "So's Chase at 11, and Many Hanny at 19." The editor admitted he wanted to short all of the crummy weapons makers, but he had to stick to his knitting. He was shorting a thousand shares of Time Warner, the media conglomerate, at 79. He ticked off all the negatives: big debt, layoffs, trouble starting up new magazines, and fewer ad pages. His way to play the coming war? "Short Disney at 92: with all the Arab terrorism that lies ahead, and with a long ground war on television every night, who is going to want to go see Mickey Mouse?"

As the two lawyers swapped futures contracts and strike prices for their puts—devices that allow you to profit only if there is a steep decline in the market—my stomach tightened. "We're dead," I whispered to my wife. "We've gotta cover everything, every last short. If we don't they're gonna carry us out of here."

Unlike everyone else at brunch, my wife and I trade stocks for a living. As professionals, we have to profit off good and bad stock markets. By nature, we short constantly, because as J. P. Morgan once stated, markets tend to fluctuate. Shorting is dangerous business. When you buy stocks you can only lose what you've spent. When you short, you can lose much, much more, particularly if the stocks double or triple after you sell them.

Going into this brunch our firm was shorting Time Warner, Disney, Wells Fargo, a half-dozen Northeast banks, and just about every real estate and brokerage stock in the country. We owned puts on five retailers and a host of conglomerates from General Electric to Westinghouse. All of these positions, put on at much higher prices than were bandied at the brunch, were very profitable. But I knew at that brunch that I was on the wrong side of the wager. When intelligent but amateurish speculators are swapping tales of short-selling favorites, look out above, for the pain of a short going against you is unequaled in the investing firmament.

That meal was 30 points ago for Wells Fargo and Disney, and 40 points for Time Warner. The New York banks have all jumped between 20 and 30 percent, and everyone knows how high the stock market traveled. We're still in business, but only because we covered by buying up stock wherever we had shorted. But had we actually gone long on everything that got trashed that day, we'd have made so much money we could have retired.

Since then I've read hundreds of articles about why the stock market skyrocketed: the Fed eased aggressively, the war went better than expected, inflation subsided—oh, all the usual standards. But I know better: the market went up in part because everybody got negative at the bottom—everyone from this magazine with its fashionable "abyss" cover story to the two lawyers patting themselves on the back for a strategy that would lose them thousands of dollars in just a few days' time. Others spotted this as just another trend, and started buying at the bottom. Unfortunately for the bears, the system simply refused to collapse.

And the weapons worked. The banks didn't all fail,

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the Fed's strategy of lowering interest rates started to succeed. And even the lowly dollar, poor-mouthed for so long, finally bottomed, a function of the stunning reversal in America's trade fortunes. In brief, the stock market made quick frauds of all who had lost faith in things American.

What happens now, after such a huge run? Certainly some industries are undeserving of these heady levels. Most of the auto industry is still a shambles. Some of the technology stocks seem hopelessly inflated in light of the price wars we are now seeing in the personal computer stores. And commercial real estate shows no turnabout, even as lower interest rates work their affordability magic for new homebuyers.

But there are plenty of other stocks that will continue to climb as Americans come to their senses about a simple fact: things simply aren't that bad out there. The 400-point rise came as a rude slap in the face for the collective naysayers, but most still refuse to capitulate, even as their shorts reach untenable levels for them. As long as the short-interest figures stay at record high levels—as they were just this week—higher prices lie ahead.

JAMES J. CRAMER is president of Cramer & Co., a New York investment management firm.

How the experts blew it, big-time.

GULFBALLS

By Jacob Weisberg

If the authorities who have analyzed the Gulf crisis for the past several months were doctors, their malpractice insurance premiums would be due for an increase. Were they baseball players, they'd be sent back to the minors. Were they samurai, they'd commit seppuku. Never in the field of human conflict have so many been so wrong about so much, so publicly. Experts, however, pay no penalty for being wrong. Most have already been back on the same TV shows and op-ed pages offering fresh insights. So before memories of the crisis fade, it may be worth taking time out to honor a few of the season's most remarkable performances. As is the tradition of the National Academy of Opinion Arts, each winner will be presented with a "Zbig," a lifelike, thirteen-inch bronze statue of former national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski with his foot in his mouth.

The award is named for a true master. On December 5 Brzezinski assured the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that a war would split the international consensus against Iraq. "The United States is likely to become estranged from many of its European allies, and it is almost certain to become the object of widespread Arab hostility," he testified. He went on to predict that the war would be protracted, would be financially devastating, and would deprive us of the fruits of our victory in the cold war. He also warned that some Israeli leaders might "seek to take advantage of an expanded war to effect the expulsion of all Palestinians from their homes on the West Bank." Ten days later he stated on CNN, "We will be bogged down in a protracted mess in the Middle East." On January 27 he predicted Saddam would use chemical weapons as soon as ground fighting started. By February 4 he was forecasting a "a global wave of sympathy for Iraq," "a decline in domestic support for military action," and "a rise in bitter domestic divisions." Oh, well, never mind.

Best melodramatic monologuist. The winner in this category is George Ball, the distinguished former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. Testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on December 20, Ball predicted that Saddam, "conditioned by the psychology of the Middle Eastern bazaar," would try to bargain his way out of his predicament. If the United States refused to bargain and precipitated a war, he said, "First, the coalition would almost completely fall apart overnight." Few coalition members, Ball warned the senators, "would dare stand with the United States in a destructive war against an Arab state, particularly if we began that war before the sanctions option had been thoroughly exhausted. One would expect a war also to leave the United States in the position of a pariah in the whole Middle East, with not a single friend except Israel." Arabs can fight other Arabs, Ball concluded, but when a Western power brings its huge resources to bear against an Arab nation "there will be bitter talk of the Crusades and Western colonialism, and all the occasions in history where the Western world has appeared to intervene in what the Arabs regard as [their] own affairs."

Best fictional screenplay. In the category of pure invention, the academy recognizes the achievement of Daniel T. Plesch of the British American Security Information Council. Plesch's February 8 *New York Times* op-ed played out an apocalyptic scenario in which a chemical attack causes U.S. troops to "panic and run," sand gets in our tank engines, and Iraqi troops push into Saudi Arabia. The intifada resumes, causing Israel to attack Saddam. Our Arab allies switch sides. "After the Iraqis use anthrax to halt a renewed coalition offensive, the U.S. resorts to nuclear weapons, outraging the Arab world, which accuses the West of genocide. Iraqi-backed terrorists then attack Western nuclear power plants and bomb Union Station in Washington." Public and congressional support for the war collapse, forcing the United States to sue for peace and cede parts of Kuwait to Iraq.

Cecil B. DeMille Award. This prize honors gratuitous hyperbole in estimating ground war casualties. The competition was stiff. With the aid of computer model-

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Shrink rap

Of the erroneous Gulf pundits, one perhaps deserves special appreciation. Judith Kipper, an associate at the Brookings Institution, is arguably the highest-profile talking head to emerge from the crisis in the Gulf. Since the start of the crisis she has been on "Nightline" several times, ABC's "World News Tonight" on numerous occasions, CNN's "Newsmaker Sunday," the "MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour," National Public Radio, C-SPAN, and the Discovery Channel. She's been quoted in newspapers throughout the country and testified before the Senate Foreign Relations and House Armed Services committees. She's also been the most consistently wrong about the conflict.

Kipper is a special case because she has no political, academic, diplomatic, or military experience in the Middle East. Her graduate studies consist of a master's degree in clinical psychology. She doesn't speak Hebrew or Arabic, and has never written anything on the region much longer than an op-ed. In a field in which a Ph.D., a book, or a distinguished career in the foreign or armed services is essential, Kipper is an anomaly.

Her secret? She has long been a networker par excellence. In the late '60s Kipper managed to get Walter Cronkite's attention (he does not recall how), prompting him to call Sandy Socolow, then executive producer of CBS's "Evening News." According to Socolow, "He asked me to find a place for her. So I did." She worked there for a short time as a researcher. After leaving CBS, she was hired by Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, the publisher of *L'Express*, doing public relations work. She subsequently made a number of trips to the Middle East and started free-lance writing. Her next big break came in 1980, when she was invited by her friend William Baroody Jr., then president of the American Enterprise Institute, to work at AEI as a journalist in residence. The appointment raised some eyebrows because Kipper had never been a staff writer in print journalism. Today, when asked about it, Baroody cannot remember what writing experience prompted him to give her the job.

At AEI Kipper dropped journalism and put to use the rolodex she had built through her trips to the Middle East. She set up a lecture series for visiting Arab and Israeli dignitaries. The forum featured both sides of the conflict, but after a while the anti-Israel bias became too obvious for the institute to tolerate. According to Herb Stein, a senior fellow at AEI, a number of fellows complained. When AEI ousted Baroody in 1986, it sent Kipper packing soon after, citing budgetary constraints.

She was not unemployed for long. Peter Jennings, another powerful patron and by then close friend, helped her to land yet another job: a contract with ABC News to consult on Middle Eastern affairs, beginning in October 1986. She is still a paid consultant for ABC and has an unpaid post at Brookings running another Middle East speaker's forum. She is paid for performing the same service for the Council on Foreign Relations.

Kipper's technique in writing about the Middle East is singular. As another member of the Council on Foreign Relations put it, "She visits the heads of states of Arab countries and she talks to them, and these men want to send messages to the United States and to Israel and she does it for them in the guise of scholarship."

In 1984, for instance, Kipper went to Syria, talked with "top government and Baath party officials," and argued in a *New York Times* op-ed that "Syria does have an interest in an independent Lebanon sovereign over all its territory. Why? Because that would be the best guarantee that Israel would not annex Lebanon or threaten Syria militarily." Of course, President Assad's policy was then, as it is now, to keep factions in the area armed and fighting each other as a pretext for the Syrian army to "mediate" the conflict it is helping to prolong. Still, Kipper sticks to her thesis even today, despite Syria's recent shelling of General Aoun, the commander of the Lebanese army, into submission. Damascus is also installing pliant generals to lead the Lebanese army, further extending Syrian hegemony in the country.

The Gulf crisis, however, saw Kipper's finest performance. Using the platform of ABC News, Kipper abandoned scholarly pretense and recast herself as America's diplomat-at-large to the Middle East. The gist of her punditry was that though Saddam may be a little rough, he is first and foremost a pragmatic man. On the night of the invasion she argued on "Nightline" that Saddam had invaded for the eminently practical purpose of saving his economy. In fact, the country's economy was stronger in 1990 than it had been for years, allowing Saddam to pay off some $3.4 billion in debt service. A week later she saw signs that the Iraqis were "willing to do business," and said a deal would emerge from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's emergency Arab summit. (The Iraqis showed not even the slightest interest in a deal.) On September 16 Kipper predicted that sanctions would work in a matter of "weeks or months." On November 16 on NPR she invited America to take Saddam at his word when he says that "everything is negotiable, including withdrawal from Kuwait." (She didn't mention the preconditions that made this offer a non-starter.)

Her analysis throughout the Gulf crisis said little about the politics of the Middle East, but a great deal about the politics of Judith Kipper. It's not that she's anti-Israel—her criticism would put her not far from the center of the Israeli Labor Party—or that she is pro-Arab. Rather, her politics stem from an unwavering quasi-religious faith in the power of Dialogue. Having a poor grasp of the cultural, economic, and religious complexities of the region, she clings to the idea that the Middle East conflict would be over later tonight if everyone in the region just sat down, held hands, and talked out their angst.

All the Middle East lacks, therefore, is a good clinical psychologist to facilitate discussion, a job Kipper pursues by networking with all the players in the game. This includes Arab leaders, most of whom scrupulously monitor what is being written and said about them and only grant visas and access to people with friendly faces. So though she'll tell a friend that Assad is "the Middle East's biggest Godfather," the furthest she'll go in print is to call him a "tough customer." (A week into the pillage of Kuwait, Kipper called Saddam "a tough cookie.")

The Gulf crisis undid many of the myths dear to Kipper over the years: that Syria has no designs on Lebanon, that the PLO is moderate, that Israeli intransigence is the greatest threat to peace, that a candid conversation is a panacea for the region's ills. Not that this has stopped her reaching a pinnacle of influence in the media. But given the record of the rest of them, perhaps that's no great surprise.

DAVID SEGAL

David Segal is a Washington writer.

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ing, Joshua Epstein, a military analyst at the Brookings Institution, was able to determine that American casualties would range between 3,344 and 16,059. He neglected to mention that his margin of error was plus or minus 10,000 percent. Zbig guessed 20,000 American deaths. Pat Buchanan forecast 30,000. More conservatively, Ted Kennedy said there would be 3,000 casualties a week. The Center for Defense Information predicted 45,000 casualties. "Now we have examined very carefully the data from the Iran-Iraq war and we are absolutely convinced, all 100 of us military men at the Center for Defense Information, that Iraq is going to be a very powerful and determined foe," said Gene LaRoque of the CDI. But the prize goes to James Webb, former secretary of the Navy, who predicted the Army would be "bled dry" in three weeks.

Best sound editing. The Academy wishes to recognize the achievement of Edward Luttwak, who told the Senate Armed Services Committee that even with extended preliminary "softening up" by air power and a nonfrontal attack, a best-case scenario would mean "several thousand killed in action and maimed." Luttwak, who repeated his dire warnings against a ground war in THE NEW REPUBLIC among other places, wins not for his prediction, which was no more erroneous than many, but for his subsequent effort to delete it from the sound track. "I was not going to give my real forecast of casualties," Luttwak told *The Washington Post.* "As advocate, you only make forecasts when they are conducive to your advocacy."

Best special effects. This award honors spectacular and/or vivid predictions that domestic support for the war would collapse. Republican Senator John McCain said in September, "If you get involved in a major ground war in the Saudi desert, I think support will erode significantly. Nor should it be supported. We cannot even contemplate, in my view, trading American blood for Iraqi blood." John Wheeler, of the aptly named Center for the Vietnam Generation, testified before the House Banking Committee in November that domestic support would evaporate with the first shot, if not sooner. "Confidence in our public institutions and elected representatives, already torn by S&L and budget controversies and still diminished by memories of Watergate and Vietnam, will slip even more," he predicted. He added that the ground war would cost a trillion dollars. But the winner in this category is Oliver Stone, who told *The New York Times* just before the ground war: "I see a parallel reality. There is a major time-warp going on here. The quickening of the American pulse. We all feel the '60s are coming back." Come on baby, light my fire.

Best stunt work. This coveted award goes to James Schlesinger, the former two-time Cabinet secretary and CIA director, for his daring midair conversions. Schlesinger began in August by arguing for a diplomatic settlement on the grounds that the embargo wouldn't work because other nations would cheat, and it would be ruinous to us if it did work. In November he testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee that the embargo was "the most successful ever achieved aside from time of war," and insisted sanctions would work in time. Saddam showed a "willingness, if not an eagerness to compromise." And we'd better make a deal, he said, because a war "may result in an enmity directed at the United States for an extended period, not only by Iraq and its present supporters, but ultimately among the publics of some of the nations now allied to us." On February 13 he was still warning, on "MacNeil/Lehrer": "Arab public opinion is turning against us." Schlesinger's previous endeavor was as secretary of defense in the 1970s, when he tried to kill the Patriot missile.

The T. E. Lawrence Award. This special prize goes to James Akins, former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, for his repeated contention that our failure to understand the inscrutable Arab character would lead to a fiasco. Even now he insists that the Gulf will soon explode with anti-American fury. In a March 3 *New York Times* op-ed he argued that Arabs compare George Bush to Hulagu Khan, commander of the Mongol Horde that destroyed Baghdad in 1258. Unless the president plumps for an international peace conference to settle all the region's problems, he wrote, our presence will lead to disaster à la the Beirut Marine barracks, and the Democrats will coast to victory in 1992 on their opposition to the war.

The Saddam Hussein Humanitarian Award. To negotiations specialist Roger Fisher, the author of *Getting to Yes,* who warned the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in December that "victory would be a disaster." The reason: overthrowing dictators never solves problems. The mistake of what Fisher called our "lawless policy" was failing to offer Saddam enticements to pull out from Kuwait. In exchange for withdrawing, Iraq must expect "to receive recognition of its legitimate grievances." As a carrot, Fisher suggested that we agree to start talking about the Palestinian problem to give Saddam a face-saving success.

Best makeup. This category honors lurid overestimates of Saddam's strategic acumen. In December Michael Hudson, a professor of international affairs at Georgetown University, noted that Saddam was "going over the heads of the Arab leaders and appealing directly to the people. And he seems to be having some success." Marshall Wiley, a former American ambassador to Iraq, said on January 17: "He has set a trap that we are walking into. . . . He expects to take a military defeat, but he is willing to pay that price for what he sees as a political victory." But Phebe Marr of the National Defense University was the walkaway winner in this category. In Saddam, she maintained, "we are dealing with a tough but pragmatic adversary," "a shrewd political practitioner," a flexible man, who would leave Kuwait when he felt his power base threatened. "To sum up," Marr told the House Armed Services Committee in December, "I believe that Saddam Hussein does not want war, and will go to considerable lengths to avoid it."

The winners are invited to a banquet following the ceremony. Crow will be served, garnished with ashes for flavoring. ●

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Torture victims and tense victors.

THE RAPE AND RESCUE OF KUWAIT CITY

By Michael Kelly

KUWAIT CITY

One sunny afternoon in the week of liberation, I went to the theater. The hall at Kuwait University's school of music and drama is a place of conspicuous civilization, a big cantilevered room with modestly elegant blue cloth seats trimmed in gold, rich wood-paneled walls, and a deep, broad stage set above a large orchestra pit. I expected to be alone there but instead found a British television crew videotaping the statement of 29-year-old Abdullah Jasman, Kuwaiti citizen, University of Pittsburgh graduate, and victim of a torture session in this unlikely place. He was standing in the balcony, talking and crying. Here and there, the tile floor was spotted with drops of dried blood, little trails that went no place in particular.

"On the stage," Jasman said, pointing to a large section of steel set scaffolding, "you can see the metal frame. They put you on that, naked, with both legs spread and they spread you open all the way. . . . They raped one of my friends here. They raped him. They were laughing. They said, 'This is what your Emir did to you. . . .' There were a bunch of us brought here. You sat in these chairs, waiting to be tortured, blindfolded, and couldn't see anything. You'd hear the voices, loud, and the screaming and begging."

He pulled up his pant legs and showed the camera his calves, mottled with deep black burn wounds. "They put the wires on your legs and put your feet in the water, so your whole body is electricity," he said. "They would put you with the electricity in the water for twenty seconds, thirty seconds, and you would go unconscious and they would throw water on you and revive you, and then do it again." He began crying, in short, harsh, shuddering sobs, and he could not stop for many long, videotaped seconds.

After it was over, the British reporter thanked him. "It must have been terrible for you to go through this," he said. "But it is important. Your story is really something else." Actually, the terrible thing is, it really wasn't. It was as common as sand in Kuwait. It was, in one variation or another, simply the story of living in Iraq's 19th Province for seven months under the rule of Saddam Hussein.

MICHAEL KELLY is TNR's special correspondent in the Gulf region.

One of the new, post-liberation pieces of graffiti here is a two-foot-high, three-foot-long message in red spray paint on a concrete wall, along the formerly lovely Gulf Street, amid the debris of the Iraqi army's elaborate and worthless beachfront defenses. It reads: "Diarty Iraqis." Apart from the slight misspelling, it is a commendable statement: accurate, succinct, and restrained. What the Iraqi forces did to this place was profoundly dirty; was filthy, vile, obscene; was one long, vast crime.

The city the Iraqis left behind appeared to have been worked over by a huge army of drunken teenage vandals. They stole everything they could, from air conditioners to cigarettes, in a citywide smash and grab. The huge and superb medical library at the city's teaching hospital, Mubarak Al-Katib, was stolen in its entirety. So was the library at Kuwait University, along with the school's big mainframe computers and everything else worth a cent. Standing near the library, where a few thousand bedraggled books (*Henry the Fifth, The Italian Renaissance and its Historical Background*, etc.), along with hundreds of thousands of index cards, remained scattered on the floor, Omar Samman, an 18-year-old student, described the looting: "They came in with lorries and took everything—the computers, the books, the carpets, the chairs, the keyboards, the carrels, the microphones, the podiums. It took them nearly a whole month, with men in lorries every day, before they got it all."

What the Iraqis could not steal, they destroyed, in an astonishingly savage and thorough rampage. They torched every major hotel, the banks, car dealerships, almost every store in the downtown shopping district, a score of major office buildings, the fishing marina and all its boats, the National Museum, and a great deal more. They ruined the beachfront with lines of concertina wire, bunkers, pillboxes, and mines, and turned Gulf Street's luxury apartment buildings into high-rise bunkers, cinderblocking the windows into gun ports. They shot up and burned down the Emir's office and residential palaces, as well as the parliament building, smashing the windows and doors and breaking the furniture for kicks.

Kuwaitis were stunned by the Iraqi soldiers' habit of

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turning every place they went into a sty. At Kuwait University every office, it seemed, was ankle- to calf-deep in debris; the contents of desks and files dumped on floors, paintings ripped from walls, chairs and tables overturned. In one room was a great pile of gold- and azure-trimmed academic robes, sodden and stinking of urine. At the Al-Ahadat police station, which the Iraqis converted into one of many makeshift prisons, as many as 200 men were locked in one 30-by-30-foot room, with no beds or blankets. The prisoners slept on a filthy tile floor and used scraps of styrofoam for pillows. As elsewhere, the Iraqis' own living quarters in the prison contained layer on layer of grime; half-eaten, rotting plates of food flung into corners, trash and garbage covering the floors, graffiti ("Hosni Mubarak is a Son of a Bitch") covering the walls, the stench of feces and urine heavy in the air.

It is the human factor that hurt most, though. The Iraqi forces treated the people here as they did the property. They trashed them. "They killed the people and threw their bodies in the dirt," said District Attorney Nassar Seleh. "They killed the people like they were chickens."

When I first got here, a day and a half after most of the Iraqi troops had fled in the middle of the night, and a day after Kuwaiti troops had entered, I met on the road into town a polite, middle-aged newspaper writer named Abdullah Al-Khateeb. He led me to a grubby little piece of ground, a few blocks from his home, and across the street from a building where the Iraqi state security agents had one of their headquarters. We walked about twenty yards in from the sidewalk. Behind us, the street was filled, as it would be for days, with uproarious celebration; gunshots, horns, shouts, and whistles, and dark-robed women ululating—the high-pitched series of rapid tongue and glottal stops that is an Arab noise of public emotion. We stopped by a bloody red and white kefiyeh, the Arab man's commonwear headdress. Next to it were two sets of scuff marks in the dirt, and two big patches of rusty, dried blood.

"Here," said Khateeb, pointing, "is where the two boys kneeled. And here, to the side, is where the Iraqis stood. They shot the boys here, one with a pistol in the forehead, and one with a pistol in the back of the head. The boys died here."

Abdul Rahman Al-Awadi, Kuwait's minister of state for cabinet affairs, claims that 33,000 people disappeared since August 2. The Iraqis are reliably estimated to have taken as many as 20,000 prisoners to Iraq to serve as slave laborers, and another 3,000 to 5,000 as hostages and shields in the days just before the allied ground offensive. By the minister's reckoning, that would put the number of murdered between 8,000 and 10,000. This figure is improbable, but not wildly so. The precise number was still being worked out at the end of the first week of liberation, but it was clear by the evidence that it would amount to at least a couple of thousand. The dead were everywhere.

IRAQI SOLDIERS SURRENDER TO U.S. MARINES INSIDE KUWAIT (ABC NEWS PHOTO)

In a cemetery in the southern suburban district of Rigga, mass graves, each reportedly containing seven or eight men or boys, stretched for long rows. Cemetery workers said the slots contained about 1,000 bodies. There are ten major hospitals in Kuwait City, and all report having handled atrocity victims. At Mubarak Hospital, one of the city's largest, the chief of surgery, Dr. Abdullah Behbehani, said that from late August through October his emergency room received groups of five to ten corpses almost every day. At the Al-Amira Hospital, Dr. Sabah Al-Hadeedi said he can document, with photographs and fingerprints, thirty-eight executions.

Subhi Younis, an ambulance driver and the chief morgue attendant at Sabah Hospital, said he had handled at least 400 and perhaps as many as 700 executed bodies over the seven-month occupation. One day, he said, forty-five bodies came in; another day, seventy. On days like that, the twenty-two refrigerated steel drawers in the morgue would fill quickly, and bodies would be laid out in a bloody, twisted carpet on the tile floor and the courtyard outside. When I visited, the morgue was still home to seven or eight unclaimed victims.

The corpse in drawer 12 had been burned to death with some flammable liquid. The body was curled like a fetus, and what remained of the head was still barely recognizable as a skull, but a skull that seemed to have

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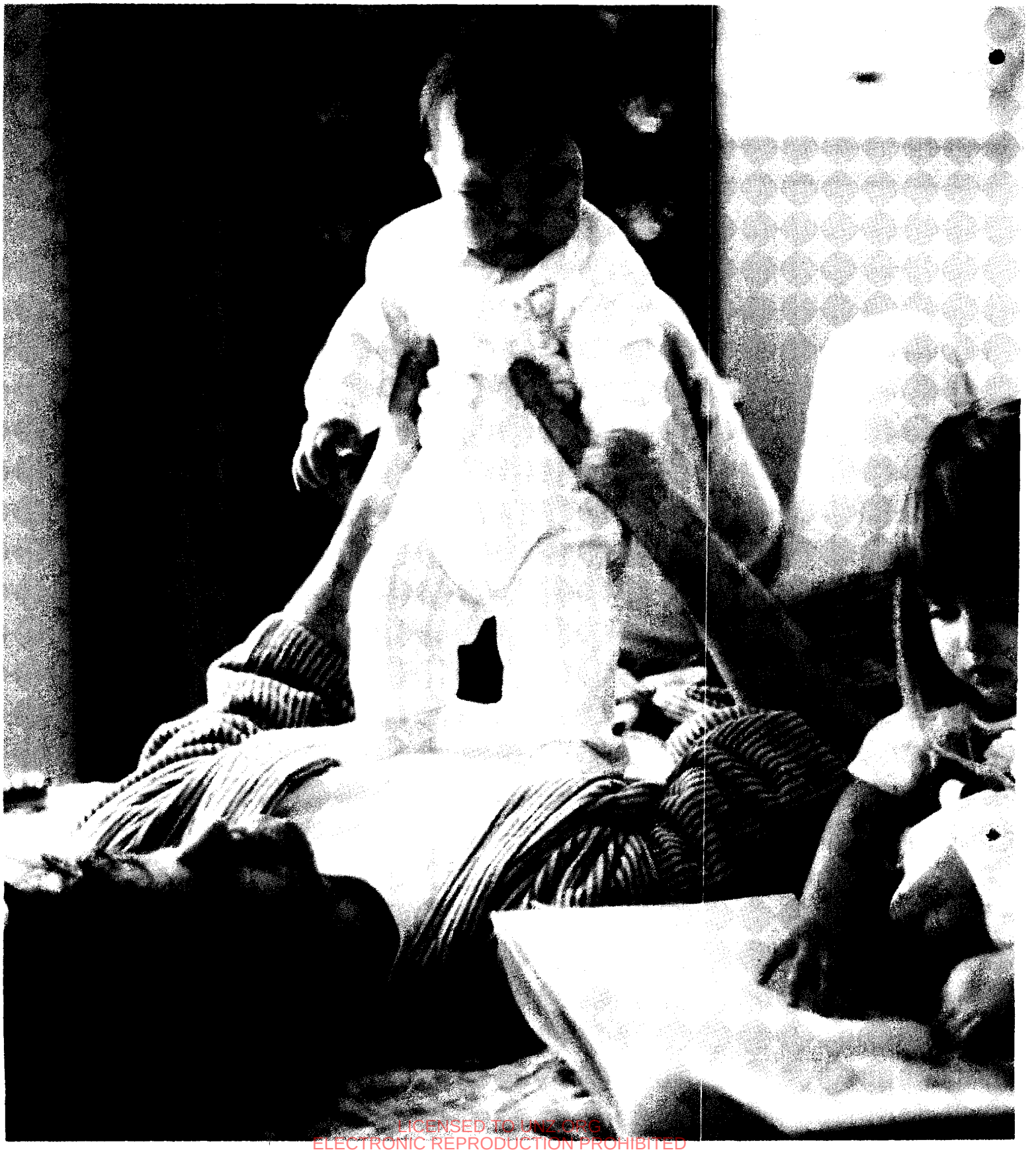

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been slathered in a brown viscous material and then baked in a kiln. It was received by the hospital on October 9, and its identity was unknown.

The corpse in drawer 16 was that of a handsome man with a full, proud black beard. His white shirt was stiff with clotted blood, as were his hair, beard, ears, lips, and nostrils. He had been shot twice, execution-style, in the head and chest. He was brought in on February 19, and he was also labeled unknown. Two men looking for a lost relative peered down at him. "That's not who I want," said one of the men. "But I know him. I can't remember the name, but I know the face. He lived in the neighborhood." He sighed and shrugged. "What can you do?"

The corpse in drawer 3 had its yellowed hands tied behind its back with a strip of white rag. The body had been beaten from the soles of the feet to the crown of the head, which had been stoved in by a club, the apparent cause of death. The legs were covered with deep purple and black bruises, some six inches or more long, and the chest was scored with a cross-hatch of purple welts.

The corpse in drawer 17 had been so badly burned it did not look like a body at all. It looked like something you might find on the beach on an early morning walk, in the smoldering remains of a driftwood fire. It came in on November 3; unknown.

Corpses 18 and 19 were two brothers, Amir Abbas and Hanza Abbas, brought in on January 20. Excited by the thought of the land war, the young Abbas men reportedly had led a small, bloody insurrection against an Iraqi police station in their suburban neighborhood. Their bodies came in with those of five of their neighbors, who were rounded up and killed for good measure, hospital officials said. Those men had been shot in the head, and Amir's eye sockets were bloody holes. "We believe the eyeballs were plucked out with fingers while he was alive," said Saba Hospital surgeon Ali Nassar Al-Serafi, with a sorry little shake of his head.

Drs. Behbehani and Hadeedi charted, in the precise way of professional accountants of casualties, the patterns of death. The first pattern is chronological, with the execution of civilians beginning several weeks after the August 2 invasion, in response to resistance efforts, and drastically increasing from mid-September on, after Saddam Hussein's brother-in-law, Ali Hassan Majid, arrived as the new governor. Majid reportedly brought in squads of trained killers from the Iraqi state security agency, the Mukhabarat. "The executions began in earnest after they sent in the special execution squads from Baghdad," said Dr. Behbehani. "We started seeing a lot of young men between the ages of 17 and 32. They arrived, not as patients to care for, but as bodies to bury."

The second pattern is one of style, identical in almost every case. After arrest, a victim would be imprisoned and interrogated for several days or weeks. Upon release, sometimes secured with bribes solicited from the family, the prisoner would be returned home and shot in the head, neck, or heart, in front of family members. Alternatively, his body, with ankles and hands bound, would be deposited near his home. The families were generally barred from retrieving the bodies from the street or doorstep until the next day, so that many might see them, and fear.

The third pattern was one of even worse brutality. "There started in late September something more severe. We started getting mutilated and tortured bodies. Not simply shot, but eyeballs taken out, heads smashed, bones broken," said Dr. Behbehani. "You would see heads that were completely unvaulted, with no brains in the skull, or multiple fractures in each arm, or severe burns in the face and body, or fingernails removed."

"The signs of torture I saw from the thirty-eight executions this hospital handled were electrical burns, where wires had been put on the chest wall and near the genitals, and cigarette burns anywhere on the body, massive bruising, and non-lethal bullets in the shoulders, kneecaps, hip, and legs," he said. At about the same time, the doctors also began seeing more cases involving women, often raped and mutilated before death. "In November a woman I know personally was brought in," Dr. Behbehani recalled. "The top of her head was gone and bullets were in her chest." Sitting at his desk, a neat, polished man reflected in a neat, polished surface, the doctor wept. "She was—my God—she was completely mutilated. There was no brain inside her skull. Why should they take her brain? Why do such a thing?"

Rape and torture not resulting in death were also common. Almost everyone I talked to in four days had a story of some friend or relative being so abused. One day a man handed me his business card, which said he was Bassam Eid Abhool, assistant electrical engineer at Kuwait International Airport. His fingernails were perhaps one-eighth of an inch long; tiny, soft, fragile little strips of ragged cuticle. "Ah, you see my fingers," said Abhool. "Iraqis, of course." His story was typical: picked up at random walking in his neighborhood; taken to a police station; hung upside down naked; beaten, tortured, interrogated; released with a warning. Much of the questioning was political. "They would say, 'You know what your Emir do for your people? Marry 200 women and take all your money—is this not true?' I would say, 'I don't know.' They would say, 'The Iraqi people have come to give freedom to people of Kuwait; is this not true?' I would say, 'I don't know.' "

On Abhool's second day in prison, his interrogators got down to serious work. "Two guys take my hands and they close my eyes, and they take the pliers and they take out, one by one, my fingernails. Then they put my fingers in water with salt," Abhool recalled in a soft, dispassionate voice. On the third day, his captors crushed his fingertips with the pliers, but on the fourth day they let him go. "Later, I see them in supermarket, and they say, 'How are your fingers, are they good?' I say, 'No, they are not good.' They say, 'Come back to the police station, we will make them good.' They laugh and laugh."

There was real resistance here, and it was never com-

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pletely overcome. Dr. Hadeedi and his colleagues entered wounded resistance fighters into the hospital as car accident victims to fool Iraqi watchers and hid an entire fifty-bed ward and operating theater in three basement storerooms. Five-person resistance cells worked in a loose food and money distribution network that provided those in need with staples and cash every week. Some people fought with arms up to the end, despite an Iraqi policy of collective reprisals that meant half a dozen Kuwaiti deaths for every Iraqi death. A favored tactic was to invite a lonely Iraqi soldier home to dinner and at evening's end stab him and bury him.

But for most people here the seven months were mostly a time for hiding. The post-liberation boasts of opposition were often about how the rich hired cranes to put their Ferraris on their rooftops, how every neighborhood was stripped of street signs and house numbers, how valuables were secreted in backyards and young men in cubbyholes.

The liberation was, above all, a release from the grinding daily horror of hiding. I went to the street where the Iraqi governor, Ali Hassan Majid, had lived in a commandeered mansion. The women who lived across the street hadn't been outside in months, because of fear of the Iraqi guards who leered at them. Two women, one older, the other just 18, showed photographs of themselves from before the invasion, portrait shots in full hairdo and makeup. "Look at us now," said the older one. "We are ugly now. Look at our clothes. We could not wash." "Look at my hair," said the younger one, holding out a tousled rope of henna-rich auburn. "It is terrible, is it not?"

The release from captivity took the form of that most pleasant of releases, a party. The bash began unexpectedly, early in the morning of February 26. "We woke up and saw the Kuwaiti flag flying from the police station," said Nassar Seleh. "You cannot imagine our feelings when we realized the Iraqi troops had gone from the city. In the night we had heard the tanks moving in the street, and we had dared hope they were going. But to wake up and find all of them gone—the city is ours again!"

Suddenly everyone was a rebel. The streets were filled with young men firing rifles and pistols, making the celebration almost as dangerouse as the battle for liberation itself. Early reports cited six such deaths in the first two days; I know of three, whose fresh graves I visited in Sulaibikhat Cemetery. "Abdullah Jassim, Who Died For Kuwait," read the stone on the mound of a man hit on top of the head by a falling round.

Suddenly everyone could be brave. People tore the Iraqi license plates from their cars; two days before, that had been a jailing offense. They displayed photographs of the Emir, wrote anti-Saddam graffiti ("Saddam, Pushed By Bush"), waved Kuwaiti flags, shouted "Kill Saddam!"; those had all formerly been hanging offenses. One car sported twenty-three photos of Kuwait's leader, his smiling face plastered on the trunk, hood, and windows, all of it festooned with bright gold and silver Christmas tree garlands. Pick-up trucks dragged effigies of Saddam by the neck through the streets, and a group of laughing teenage boys led a skinny white donkey labeled "Saddam" down the boulevard.

At Al-Amiri Hospital a long line of cars queued up to take souvenir shells from an Iraqi anti-aircraft gun, and families posed for pictures next to it. In a heavy rain storm four young women sat in a row on the trunk of an Impala, having made a seat by knocking out the rear window. They waved to the crowd like princesses, and yelled over and over, "I am Kuwaiti! I am Kuwaiti!"

For Americans the party offered the novel sensation of being adored in a foreign land. An American couldn't pay for anything that week in Kuwait, couldn't walk ten feet without being stopped to accept thanks, couldn't talk to anyone without getting an invitation to dinner or lunch. "Welcome, soldiers, you are welcome" three little girls in party frocks serenaded the U.S. Marines at the newly reopened American Embassy. "George Bush, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very, very good," an old man offered. Two women jumped from a car to proffer a daisy and a tray of cookies. "Thank you! Thank you! And thank Mr. Bush," said one. "Welcome to your country," said the other.

At one raucous do, centered on three Kuwaiti armored personnel carriers whose crews stood unusually erect in the manner of young men posing for posterity, four teenage girls wearing sweaters covered with photos of Bush, John Major, and Margaret Thatcher (each framed with little red and gold and silver spangles) worked the crowd of American soldiers and reporters with their autograph books. I wrote, self-consciously, "To Maha, on a wonderful day, 3-1-91," under an inscription from a "Captain Henry Douglas: 'To a lovely Kuwaiti girl.' "

There were few Iraqis left in Kuwait City against whom retribution could be exacted. But on the outskirts of town I did see one scene of vengeance—pretty much the last thing I saw there. Five days after liberation I drove up the road toward southern Iraq, the route Saddam's soldiers had taken in flight. Every fifty or 100 yards there was a fresh kill from the slaughter the allied forces visited on the fleeing Iraqis. From each charred and trashed vehicle the belongings of the dead Iraqi driver and the dead Iraqi soldier-passengers were spread in a dirty plume on the asphalt.

Most of the bodies had been carted away, but a fair number remained. At every spot where there was still an Iraqi corpse, a crowd had gathered. Every few minutes a new group would approach, and someone would pull the blanket down to see the enemy's face. The corpses were already decomposing, their faces yellow and black and green, their features melting together under a buzzing of flies. One by one the Kuwaitis moved cautiously forward and paid their last respects. One middle-aged man bent down, over half of a machine-gunned body wedged upside down in the driver's seat of a stolen Toyota. He spat, carefully, on the face. His friend got it all on videotape. They pulled the blanket back up and got in their car, heading up the road to spit on the next of the waiting dead. ●

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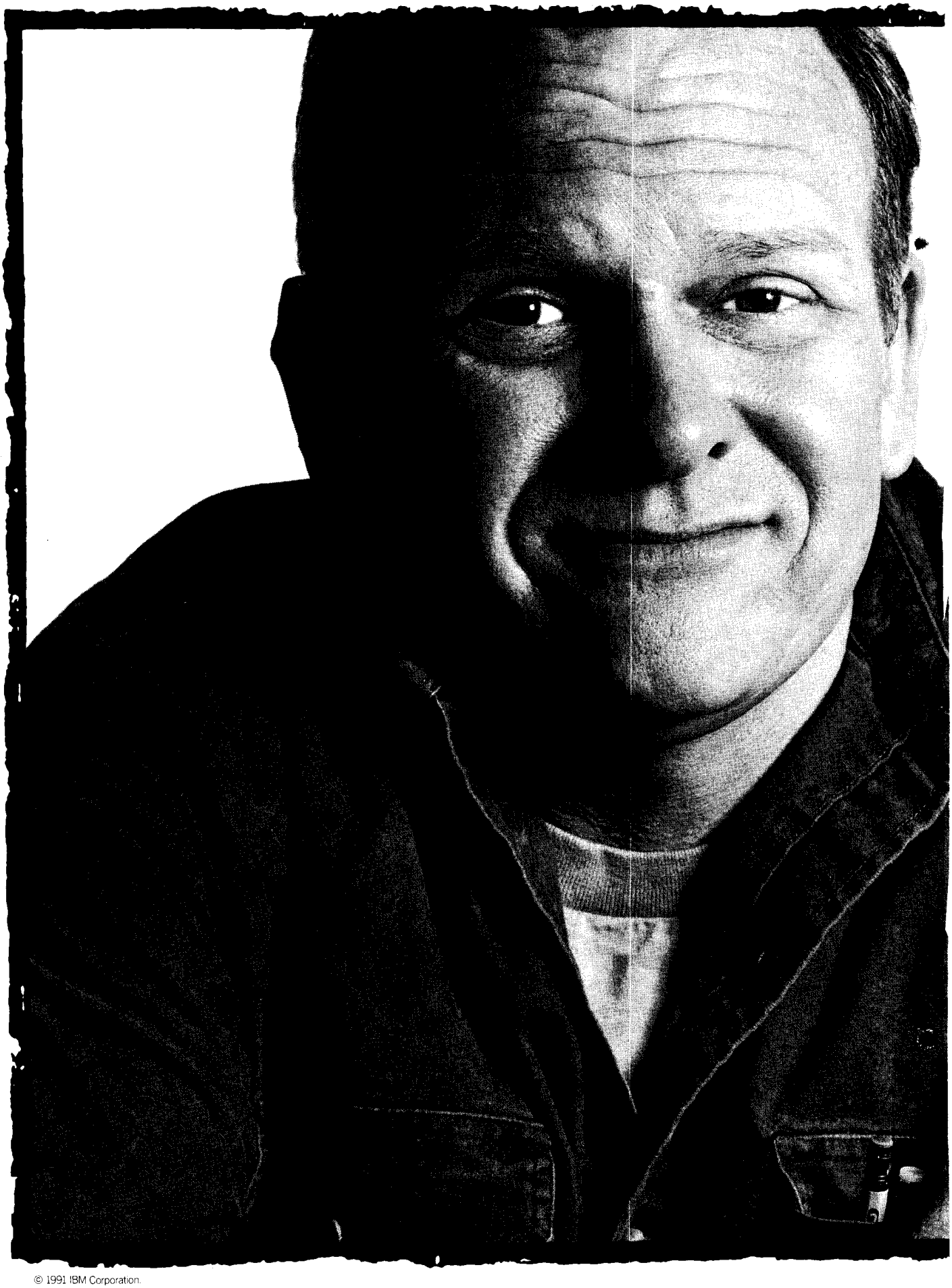

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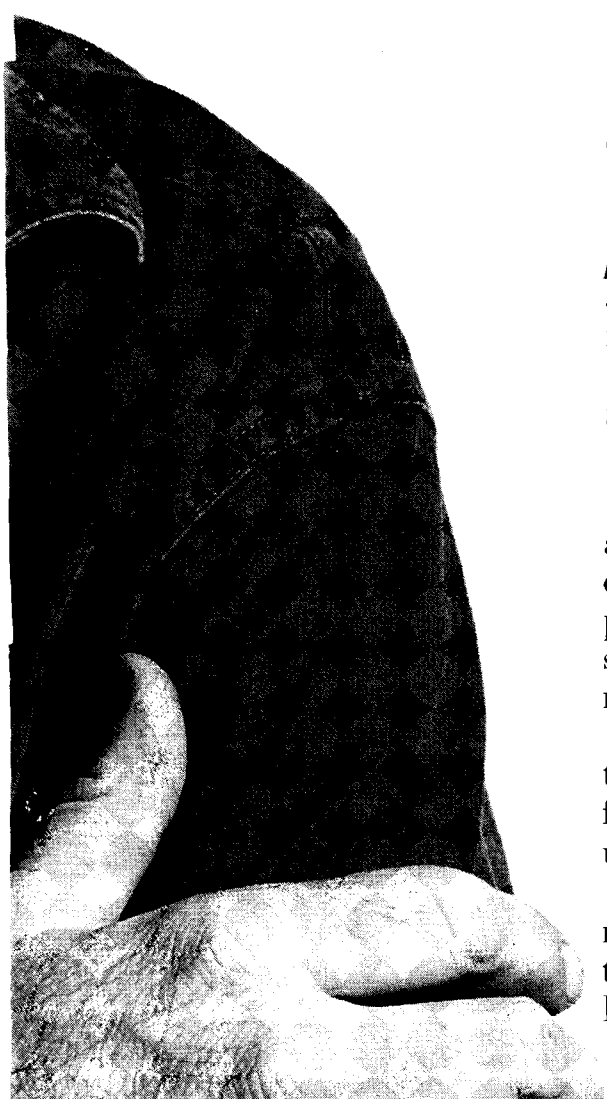
"The idea of computers in the factory used to scare the daylights out of me. Now I run one."



"I figured I'd get burned either way—computers show up and I get fired, or computers don't show up and the plant closes down.

"But what happened is, they retooled the plant and while that was going on they sent me to school, to an IBM-sponsored course at the community college.

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Pop Art and Bulls

Those who are wary of Andy Warhol as artist and as subject may be (like me) surprised at their interest in a new documentary about him. This is because Chuck Workman, who made **Superstar: The Life and Times of Andy Warhol** (Aries), is neither an idolator nor a debunker; he is an intelligent investigator, sympathetic and fair, of a somewhat serious, somewhat humorous, audacious episode in American cultural history.

Warhol's basic grip on us, as Workman's film helps us to see, is that he anticipated us. Everything that can be said about him, every attitude that he might provoke, he foresaw. This is irritating, yet ultimately winning. He knew what he was doing and said so before we could. In this documentary, for instance, he is asked why he started to make films. He replies that it's easier than painting: you just have to turn on the camera, then walk away. The fact that, for his films, this is both true and sardonically modest is disarming, and it's topped by an additional fact: he knew that both the truth and the distortion in his statement were part of a game he was playing, more with the wise than with the gullible.

Where did that knowledge, that one-step-ahead-of-everybody gift come from? The question is unanswerable, of course, but it persists because of his background. He was from a very poor Polish family in Pittsburgh, an environment that could hardly have been more remote in every sense from the milieu in which he flowered. He managed to study art at Carnegie-Mellon because his father died and the life insurance educated the son. Taught there by the estimable Philip Pearlstein, who is interviewed pleasantly in this film, he came to New York for, it would seem, a crack at a conventional career.

But something was triggered in him, possibly by his early need to do advertising work (shoes), something that sensitized him to the currents between art and commerce, something in his talent and his dry wit that produced a series of stances toward art and the world around it that, relatively quickly, made him a success. He certainly wasn't the first Pop Artist. Why should this provincial slum kid have been the one to do so very well by it? The question itself is integral to the humor of his story.

Robert Benchley once said, "After I had been writing about fifteen years, I realized I had no talent. But by then I was too famous to quit." The first part of that remark (quoted from memory) is even more of a joke in Warhol's case, and the time should of course be his own fifteen minutes; still, over the beginnings of his career hangs a similar aura of surprise. "They're *buying* these things," we can fancy him saying. "Well, I *can* paint. So I'll stick it to them." The Warhol Factory emerged, with Warhol the hard-working one-man factory within it.

He characterized himself cleverly. He was always impassive in interviews, with an absence of effort to impress that made him seem superior rather than remote. People asked him long complicated questions, and after a pause he would answer "Yes" or "No" or "What?" But to this coolness he added an avidity for high-life party-going, usually in the company of glitzy celebrities like Liza or Liz or Jackie. The combination of cold persona and hot activity worked perfectly. Cameras couldn't keep off him.

Workman's film, though it goes on a bit longer than necessary, digs deftly into every aspect of the life. He quotes from TV clips; he interviews Warhol's very different and quite appealing family back home, also colleagues, critics, dealers, technicians, and performers in Warhol films—those who are still alive. A good many of them died relatively young. (Warhol himself died in 1987 at 59, apparently of inadequate hospital care after a routine operation.) Those deaths in the last two decades lugubriously underscore that Warhol's best period was the 1960s.

Labeling by decades is dubious, but it seems to fit him. He and his friends and his followers made of the 1960s, allowing for changes, a facsimile of the 1920s. The later era took longer to arrive after a World War, but it shared the same desperate belief in hedonism as the one reliable truth and exacted the same price of talent as admission to the circus. The Warhol decade hasn't left us as much of a legacy as the earlier era, but that may be partly because the 1920s were followed by hungry, black Depression and the 1960s were followed by blithe yuppiedom.

Another difference. Finally, there's something vaguely embarrassing in the Warhol story. Besides and despite his talent, he leaves us with the feeling that he outwitted us. And is still doing it.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

The Godfather: Part III. *If you enjoyed the first two installments about this very rich family of moral degenerates, carry on with the acceptable new chapter. (Reviewed 1/21/91)* **Larks on a String.** *This Czech tragicomedy, about the Stalinist 1950s, was finished just when the Soviets arrived in 1969. Locked up for twenty years, it now exercises reticent charm and poignancy. (3/18/91)* **The Silence of the Lambs.** *Sacrifices sense and credibility for the sake of sheer scare, but it does scare. Anthony Hopkins is smoothly bestial. Tak Fujimoto's lighting is exceptional. Most of Jonathan Demme's direction is smart. (2/18/91)* **The Vanishing.** *A Dutch thriller by George Sluizer. Highly intelligent, fiendishly subtle. We know most of the facts from the start and are still gripped by mystery. (3/4/91)* —**SK**

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Stuart Rosenberg hasn't been a markedly fluent director, but he has sometimes chosen exceptionally good scripts, such as *Cool Hand Luke* and—one of my favorites among disregarded American gems—*Pocket Money*, a lovely ambling modern Western. Now Rosenberg's fluency has increased, and he returns to the modern West (Southwest, actually); but this time the script stumbles.

My Heroes Have Always Been Cowboys is the story of an aging rodeo rider, and thus may remind some of *J. W. Coop* and *Junior Bonner*. In this screenplay by Joel Don Humphreys, the rider is played by Scott Glenn, who is just OK in the part. He rides bulls, is gored by one, and comes home to his Texas town, for the first time in five years, to recuperate. He finds that his father has been moved to a retirement home by his sister and brother-in-law; that his ex-girlfriend, now conveniently widowed, can still be kindled in his direction; that there's a rodeo scheduled soon in which he might win $100,000 and solve all his problems.

Much of the story is cut to pattern, but the film could overcome that fact if it successfully exalted its subject. Often we are asked to take some sport or game—boxing, baseball, even pool—as an epitome of human agon. Often we can respond. But not here—except perhaps for residents of cattle country. Others may have my reaction. The sight of a grown man practicing for the event of his life by striding an empty oil barrel strung in midair with four ropes while two men yank at the ropes was too much for me. Too little, I mean.

The dialogue doesn't always help. It's hard to believe in a rodeo rider who talks about "something magic" happening in the arena and who says that the bull is "wild and free" and so, for a few moments, is the rider.

But it takes a while to get discouraged with this picture because of three elements. Dennis M. Hill's acute editing suggests an intelligence that the film doesn't live up to. Bernd Heinl's cinematography is fine; he understands, for instance, that shadowing a face is one way to give it prominence. And Rosenberg's directing is far better than anything of his I can remember. He used to have trouble with camera placement, but here he looks at everything justly. I wish he had a better story to look at. ●

The Wrong and Winding Road

BY STEPHEN HOLMES

The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics by Christopher Lasch

(W. W. Norton, 591 pp., $25)

Christopher Lasch yields no ground to our self-love. In *The Culture of Narcissism* (1979) and *The Minimal Self* (1984), he trained a censorious eye on America's condition, and the social pathologist's report that he issued about his decadent compatriots was almost cruel. In his new book, he affects a similarly churlish tone. Once again he broods morosely over "our darkening prospects." He believes that "our society has taken a wrong turn" and that we have fallen into "moral and cultural disorder." To his eyes, "the social fabric seems to be unravelling." Wherever he looks, he sees "spiritual disrepair," "moral chaos," "spiritual torpor," and "the loss of moral purpose." These are dispiriting observations. Are they accurate? Do they make sense? What do they imply?

Lasch weaves his account of the contemporary catastrophe into an engaging series of commentaries on writers, mainly American, from Jonathan Edwards to Barbara Ehrenreich. The ease with which he couples the history of ideas to the debates on social policy is genuinely impressive. Tending to blur his own voice with that of the authors discussed, he is sometimes cryptic. Still, his dislikes are intense and impossible to miss. Progress, imagined and real, is the main object of his ire. Among the most galling features of "progressive" society are sexual permissiveness, moral relativism, contempt for authority, the ethic of enjoyment, open-mindedness, irreligion, the decay of the family, the breakdown of traditional communities, drug addiction, the tendency to shirk responsibility, and "a general collapse of common decency."

What finally disturbs Lasch is his contemporaries' restlessness, their impatience with any and every constraint on human freedom. People can no longer see a wall without trying to scale it, a limit without trying to step beyond it. To the litany of general complaints he attaches a bill of particulars: his attack on television, for example, according to which the principal instrument of contemporary cultural transmission "destroys the capacity for respect." Such unqualified chastisement of modern times sounds remarkably like Allan Bloom or some other philosopher of the right. No surprise, then, that Lasch is periodically unmasked as a cultural conservative cloaked in a leftish fleece.

Lasch struggles to distance himself from his conservative look-alikes. He does so by uncovering the capitalist roots of most modern ills. What American right-wingers typically fail to see, he asserts, is the all-corrosive power of a free market economy: "capitalism itself, thanks to its growing dependence on consumerism, promotes an ethic of hedonism," enfeebling character, undermining the work ethic, shattering communal bonds. He even holds "capitalism" accountable for the contagious spread of narcotics: "The need for drugs—that is, for commodities that alleviate boredom and satisfy the socially stimulated desire for novelty and excitement—grows out of the very nature of a consumerist economy." Bombarded with advertising designed to titillate the senses, teenagers and others naturally gravitate toward addictive substances. As a causal analysis, this statement leaves something to be desired (evidence, for example), but it nicely displays Lasch's penchant for eye-catching, speculative sociological generalizations based on vague intuitions.

Guilt for the crisis lies most heavily, then, on economic growth and natural science. We have dragged our society to the brink of ruin because we are committed to the base goal of unlimited abundance or "prosperity for all." The followers of Adam Smith and Karl Marx quarrel heatedly over tactics, but they concur on mankind's ultimate aim: a cosmopolitan society in which technology is freely deployed to satisfy human needs. Both liberals and socialists maintain that scarcity can be abolished and "the reign of want" overcome. Lasch, by contrast, does not expect that, for most people, material conditions will improve. In fact, he does not want them to improve. He dissents from the ideal of a universal and prosperous world order.

He locates himself, therefore, outside the conventional political spectrum. For neither the left nor the right understands that the planet's resources are finite. (Only the Greens understand that.)

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The Earth is already groaning under the onslaught of "development." The foolhardiness of the modern attempt to achieve prosperity for all is revealed by "the environmental limits to economic growth." If we continue to extend Western lifestyles to the rest of humanity, nature will literally buckle and disintegrate beneath our feet. Never convincingly explained, Lasch's ecological alarmism is more ornamental than fundamental; he views environmental damage basically as a confirmation of what he had already concluded on other grounds, that commercialism and science are dire mistakes.

He seems almost gratified that nature is about to punish human beings for pursuing material prosperity. He, Lasch, did not want mankind to embrace "progress" in the first place. In fact, his principal objection to economic growth and technical innovation concerns their effect not on the natural environment, but on the human soul. They inculcate avarice, an addiction to novelty, an instrumental attitude toward others. Associated with advanced economies, the "love of comfort" erodes virility, heroism, ardor, loyalty, asceticism, the ability to suffer, the spirit of responsibility, the longing for martyrdom, moral discipline, and the capacity for devotion. Progress promotes "the spirit of hedonism and self-indulgence." As a consequence, it makes people incapable of "a tragic understanding of life." Most shocking of all, the age of abundance frustrates our profound yearning for an altar on which we can sacrifice our lives.

So what went wrong? Why did mankind set off on the unhealthy pathway toward progress? Like other enemies of technical and economic modernization, Lasch traces the current crisis to a philosophical misstep—more precisely, to two grave theoretical errors committed at the outset of the modern age. The first blunder was the emancipation of desire. In earlier periods, human desires were wisely viewed as a source of endless frustration. Desires can never be assuaged into quiescence. Once satisfied, human beings invariably clamor for more. Defined as a coincidence of capacities and needs, happiness can be achieved only by an ascetic discipline that restricts wants to a bare minimum. In the modern age, however, humanity's traditional abstemiousness was rudely thrust aside, by Adam Smith especially. Rather than trying to squelch human wants, Smith celebrated their unlimited multiplication. Happiness could still be guaranteed, despite the dizzying proliferation of desires, so long as technological and economic capacities grew apace.

The eighteenth century's positive evaluation of ever expanding wants was historically unprecedented. It provided the psychological foundation for the takeoff of surplus economies in modern Europe, and for a new ideology of progress. The energy released by the uncorking of human desires pulled Western society out of an age-old pattern. Subsistence economies limping along pathetically from famine to famine were replaced by economies of growth and abundance. Yesterday's luxuries became today's necessities. The regime of pleasure was born. History no longer seemed ruled by fatal cycles of rise and fall. Humanity began to soar shortsightedly in a single direction.

"Progress" was motored by the capitalist engine, but behind capitalism lurked the second cataclysmic blunder of modern times: natural science. Scientific curiosity proved to be a social acid. Without Mephistophelian science, modern economies would never have been able to stay atop the rising tide of human desires. Technology alone makes plausible the modern hope of eliminating scarcity; the "promise of universal abundance" was a promise made, if not kept, by science. To be sure, the apple of knowledge was hard to resist. Those modern European philosophers who committed the unpardonable transgression of saying "yes" to science were seduced by "the intoxicating prospect of man's conquest of the natural world." Not satisfied with improvements in warfare, navigation, and medicine, they were charmed by the expectation that technology might eliminate *all* constraints on human freedom.

Lasch sees eye-to-eye, in short, with the more despondent members of the Frankfurt School. He, too, believes that the Enlightenment "gave rise to the dangerous fantasy that man could remodel both the natural world and human nature itself." He conceives science as an expression of impiety, of hubris. Science is a rebellion against natural limitations. It rashly denies "our dependence on higher powers." It embodies humanity's blasphemous hankering to play God. It fosters the illusion of human self-sufficiency: "In the modern world, this illusion finds its characteristic expression in the machines by means of which mankind seeks to liberate itself from toil—that is, from the inescapable constraints of human existence." Enthroning mankind as nature's proud master and possessor, science destroys our "reverence" for the cosmos. It teaches us to "see the world as something that exists only to gratify human desires." It reduces the Earth itself to a tool of that earthworm, man. Baconian megalomania will inevitably bring punishment down upon our heads (through holes in the ozone, for instance).

And the wholly unoriginal allegations do not stop here. Technology is also alienating. It erects barriers between us and our environment: for example, in modern times, "air conditioning and central heating" protected the educated classes from the elements, but also "cut them off from the vivid knowledge of nature that comes only to those who expose themselves to her harsher moods." (A reader can't help wondering whether Lasch puts his preaching into practice. In winter does he do his writing at fifty-five degrees?) Heidegger's homilies against technology are nowhere cited, but Lasch reveals a debt to Heidegger, too, when he tells us that the proper attitude toward nature is not mastery and manipulation but, instead, "grateful acceptance."

To give his analysis a political twist, Lasch describes "the vision of men and women released from outward constraints" not only as "the core of the belief in progress," but also as "the essence of liberalism." He offers one or two grudging words of praise for the liberal tradition. For the most part, though, he regards liberal politics as a sinister accomplice to economic growth and technical innovation. Armed with "an excessive confidence in reason," liberals aim to free mankind from hardship and adversity. They promote atheism, distrust of authority, moral relativism, excessive tolerance, contempt for traditions, anti-patriarchalism, and a cosmopolitan world-view. They support gay rights, women's rights, non-punitive child-rearing practices, and a "flexible" attitude toward sex roles. They favor educational opportunities and social mobility. They ridicule patriotism. And they display a "humanitarian horror of violence." (This is meant as a criticism.) They see every demand for law and order as another symptom of the fascist mind, of which they are unreasonably afraid.

Liberals also assert the right to kill fetuses. And, of course, they scorn motherhood as an unworthy profession. His indignation about "the feminist disparagement of motherhood," in fact, provides a good example of the way that Lasch brings his ontological lucubrations down to the level of the op-ed page. Pro-choice activists, he explains, are simply the latest heirs to the modern ideology of progress:

> Their insistence that women ought to assume "control over their bodies" evinced an impatience with biological constraints of

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any kind, together with a belief that modern technology had liberated humanity from those constraints and made it possible for the first time to engineer a better life for the human race as a whole.

His summary of pro-choice thinking here is astonishing. Why should couples who discover that their unborn progeny has severe and irreversible brain damage be legally permitted to make the tragic choice for abortion? Those who support the right to choose, according to Lasch, do so because they hope to prevent the arrival of children unfit for "success" in the bourgeois rat race. (How does he know this?)

His principal concern is not the fetus at all. What offends him about the pro-choice movement is not its heedlessness of fetal life, but its indifference to the will of nature. This is why he can let his critique of abortion slide smoothly into a critique of the contraceptive mentality: "The objection that sex and procreation cannot be severed without losing sight of the mystery surrounding both struck liberals as the worst kind of theological obscurantism." Lasch, be it noted, urges compliance with the will of nature from a purely secular point of view. A limit is a limit. Those who transgress one will transgress them all. Because he believes this, he even implies, in a bewildering passage, that those favoring birth control are one step away from "far-reaching programs of eugenic engineering."

Lasch treats Alasdair MacIntyre, the Catholic communitarian philosopher, as something of an authority. Unfortunately he doesn't proceed in a MacIntyrish way, defending traditional values against the purported nihilism of modern times. Rather than making a philosophical case for premodern ideals, Lasch poses as the voice of a neglected, scorned, and humiliated social class. His ideas don't simply rattle around in his head, they have social roots. He is a self-appointed spokesman for "the ethnic worker." And this is surely one of the most worrisome aspects of his book: to attack the reigning orthodoxy, Lasch hopes to tap the smoldering discontent of lower-middle-class whites.

Those who were once self-employed producers do not swallow the prevailing myth of progress, he explains, for they were the principal victims of economic change. Unlike the rest of us, ethnic workers are comfortable with limits. They are immune to modern restlessness. They feel no irresistible compulsion to leap across the next horizon. They are ambitionless. Indifferent to the cult of individual achievement, they want nothing more than to retain their way of life. In the nineteenth century, they "sometimes sacrificed their children to their passion for home ownership, forcing them into the workplace instead of sending them to school." A teacher by profession, Lasch implies that this was not as "irrational" as liberals might assume. What some would deplore as a failure of imagination, he views as a sign of psychic health. The petite bourgeoisie he holds up for our admiration, in any case, is locally entrenched, morally conservative, committed to family life, respectful of craftsmanship. Its members are staunchly loyal to fellow ethnics. All they want is to be self-employed again, which is precisely what hyperactive capitalism will never allow them to become.

The lower middle classes have their darker side, of course. Lasch mentions narrowness, servility, envy, resentment, parochialism, racism, nativism, and anti-intellectualism. But unlike other classes, this class can be trusted to keep its destructive impulses under control. (What about Bensonhurst and Howard Beach?) At the opposite pole from the ethnic workers are the liberal intellectuals. The most dangerous political enemy of the lower middle class, they are wholly incapable of accepting limits or repressing their malevolent urges. One group is noble. The other group is base.

Lasch explains the subtle difference with a mystifying detail: "Liberals saw the

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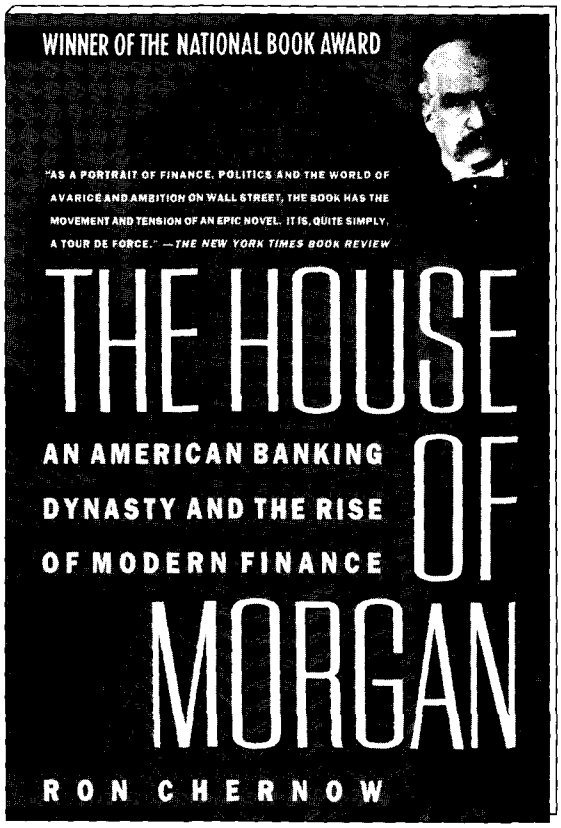
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graffiti scrawled on the subway cars as a vibrant new form of folk art, while ethnic workers saw them as part of the crisis of civility." But liberals do not merely poeticize the defacement of public property. They also pour scorn on religion and family values. They live in the suburbs, drive foreign cars, frequent museums and concerts, fly around the world, and eat in fancy restaurants where they can be seen. They celebrate self-expression and self-advancement. All this helps to explain their hopeless failure to sympathize with the petite bourgeoisie. They view white ethnic solidarity condescendingly, as an expression of atavistic impulses destined to pale in the sunlight of reason.

For their unbearable arrogance, however, liberals have paid a heavy price. Their very language has degenerated: they speak an "academic English" that has lost touch with common speech, and they can barely understand the regional dialects and "earthy idioms" characteristic of ethnic workers. (This is pure MacIntyre.) Put simply, the typical liberal is a rootless cosmopolitan—an old term of abuse that Lasch finds apt, and that he hopes, unbelievably, to rescue from its wholly accidental association with fascist and Stalinist anti-Semitism.

To the suggestion that lower-middle-class resentment against liberalism is an expression of racism, Lasch strongly objects. Willie Horton was *not* the tip of an iceberg. The centerpiece of the argument here is the anti-busing movement. Lasch sees busing, correctly, as an issue on which liberals are politically vulnerable. He rehearses all the stock arguments, deploring the way that " 'limousine liberals' in the suburbs expect the cities to carry the whole burden of desegregation." The white working classes viewed liberal busing policy not only as patronizing, but also as an intolerable invasion of their ethnic enclaves, an attempt to destroy their communities. The fact is, "The burden of busing notoriously fell on ethnic neighborhoods in the cities, not on suburban liberals whose schools remained effectively segregated or on wealthy practitioners of 'compassion' whose children did not attend public schools at all." Liberals are hypocrites, do-gooders at the expense of other people's loyalties, and on the backs of other people's children.

But they are not alone in their misdeeds. Martin Luther King Jr. is also guilty for "his ill-conceived campaign for open housing in Chicago." What King failed to see was that "blacks could not hope to achieve their objectives by demanding the dissolution of white communities whose only crime, as far as anyone could see, was their sense of ethnic solidarity." King is explicitly taken to task for "his distaste of anything smacking of separatism." If you think this sounds like a defense of ethnic and racial fragmentation, a tower-of-Babel version of the American dream, you are not far off the mark. Black communities should be strengthened internally, not dispersed by integration. Lasch's thesis, then, is that "the advantages of community cohesion" far outweigh "the dangers of racial separatism." That liberals oppose balkanization shows how little they understand human nature and its limits.

King's earlier activism had been successful, Lasch opines, because it was firmly rooted in "the regional culture of the South." The farther he moved from tribal politics, the more pitiably his efforts misfired. Thus King made a terrible mistake in trying to transplant the civil rights movement from Southern black communities to the secularized and urbanized North. Equally inept was his attempt to forge "an interracial coalition" of disadvantaged groups. This liberal tactic was "morally flawed" because, among other things, it diluted the ethnic solidarity necessary to make the civil rights movement succeed. (Lasch is admittedly unclear on this point, since a few pages later he blames King for having *failed* to create "a biracial coalition" based on joint responsibility instead of common victimization.) This seems especially egregious. Surely race relations and communal cohesion in the North might be in a better state today if King had not died before he was able to work for long in the Northern cities.

Lasch endorses group loyalty. He sniffs at social mobility. He favors local uniformity and ethnic homogeneity. He hints that "cultural assimilation" may be a mistake. He even casts doubt, by indirection, on the wisdom of "racial and ethnic intermarriage." Liberals embrace assimilationism, he claims, because of an exaggerated fear of factional strife and a naive faith that human beings are capable of universal sympathies. They made "the misguided attempt to remove the sources of social conflict by discouraging particularism, in the hope that brotherly love would then come into its own." But, as could have been predicted, this attempt "killed the very possibility of brotherly love by cutting off its roots." Benevolence beyond the boundaries of one's ethnic group is a bloodless ideal, typical of the Enlightenment. Cosmopolitans and universalists offer us the "watery fellowship of humanity in general." This is tasteless gruel. Lasch's sympathies lie instead with those "advocates of particularism" who "challenged one of the central tenets of enlightened ideology, the equation of progress with the eradication of tribal loyalties and their replacement by an all-embracing love for the whole human race." The heartless assault on tribalism may be progress's greatest crime.

Somewhat unexpectedly, Lasch tries to distinguish his position from a "vague and milky communitarianism." Indeed, he devotes two important chapters to vague and milky criticisms of ordinary nostalgia for gemeinschaft. He draws a distinction between himself and other communitarian enemies of modernity by emphasizing "honest labor" as well as ethnic solidarity. He sometimes calls his philosophy "populist producerism." This separates him not only from liberals, who distrust working-class radicalism and see human beings exclusively as consumers, but also from namby-pamby communitarians who leave no room for "proprietary independence" and manly work. His goal is "the rehabilitation of work, not the democratization of consumption." He is fascinated by "the ideal of a society composed of small producers" or "a society of small workshops, in which effective control over production remained at the local level." And he is not simply looking backward; a "populism for the twenty-first century," otherwise undescribed, will give pride of place to "the self-governing workshop" and, more generally, to the "democratization of work."

Dazzled by J. G. A. Pocock's account of the civic virtue tradition, Lasch is tempted to project his own version of it into America's preindustrial past. The key figure in this idealized world (where slavery and rural poverty, apparently, did not loom large) was the self-employed producer, the moral equivalent to the militiaman-at-arms. Proprietorship gave dignity, responsibility, and manliness to the owner. Unfortunately, Lasch tells us next to nothing about the people he has in mind, who they were and how they actually lived. So we get no sense of the kinds of problems that *they* had to face. What he lets us know, by way of compensation, is that self-employed artisans and farmers viewed labor as a joyful activity, an end in itself. They had "callings," not jobs. This explains their hostile response to economic development, technical change, and especially the rise of factory production; "populists condemned innovation because it undermined proprietary independence and gave rise to 'wage slavery.' " He even ventures the bold generalization that most or all "democratic movements in the nine-

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teenth century took shape in opposition to innovation." (By exaggerating popular hostility to technical change, he makes it difficult to understand the universal enthusiasm with which all Americans greeted, say, Samuel Morse's fabulous invention.)

It should now be clear why Lasch is almost more hostile to the welfare state than to the economics of laissez-faire. Classical liberalism invented the "cult of consumption." Transfer programs changed nothing essential, accomplishing merely "a more equitable distribution of consumer goods." Under the derogatory term "consumer goods," Lasch apparently includes housing, health care, education, and child nutrition. For him, welfare programs represent just one more encroachment of shameful Enlightenment ideals. Like advocates of the untrammeled market, welfare-state liberals see human beings exclusively as consumers of utility, not as exercisers of virtue. This is why Enlightenment do-gooders have always supported automation; they consider work inherently defiling and seek relief from it by means of improved productivity, which generates abundance and thereby cuts down the need for labor.

For Lasch, the gradual abatement of toil is just another strike against economic growth. The reduction of the workday is a "paltry vision" that deserves "contempt." Aghast at physical suffering, liberal intellectuals have betrayed the promise of American life. They have conspired to corrupt and unman the worker, stealing away his (and her?) responsibilities and popularizing their own leisure-class values. And predictably enough, the working class's new addiction to material comfort has already extinguished older and more strenuous ideals. ("Populism," it should be said, has seldom been so suffused with contempt for ordinary men and women.)

The True and Only Heaven is something of a mood piece, and the mood is glum. Lasch's antipathy to progress seems to have preconceptual roots. This puts his critic at a disadvantage; you cannot argue with a state of mind. Still, his approach has some remarkable flaws that deserve to be pointed out.

- His cultural pessimism is wholly unmitigated by a genuinely comparative perspective. Things are bad, compared with when and where? Despite our presumptuous search for mastery, he claims, we are now more insecure and less in control of our lives than ever. But what about the greater part of human history when disease was rampant, famines periodic, peace rare, and life expectancy shockingly low? What kind of control over their lives have most of humanity ever had?
- His hostility toward science and technology, to the extent that it reflects ecological anxiety, is pointless. The more serious our environmental problems become, the more we need science and technology to help us deal with them. You don't sop up an oil slick with natural sponges.
- His protest against "the substitution of human choice for the blind workings of nature," if taken seriously, suggests that we should, say, stop vaccinating children or, for that matter, simply close down our hospitals. (This suggestion makes one wonder how seriously Lasch wants to be taken after all).
- His sacralization of "limits" makes it impossible for him to distinguish sensibly between the limits that deserve to be respected and those that deserve to be disrespected. And it lures him into reckless causal claims (contraception today, eugenics tomorrow).
- His portrayal of the lower middle class reveals a highly selective vision of the past. For one thing, the American petite bourgeoisie is filled with people who originally came to this country in pursuit of "progress." For another, no social class is as harmless or self-correcting as Lasch makes his ethnic

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workers appear. A good look at Poujadisme, the French populist producer's movement of the 1950s, which had leftish origins but ended up on the xenophobic and anti-Semitic right, might correct this one-sided account.

● His unbalanced view of "development" neglects the beneficial effect of economic prosperity on population growth. The richer people become, the fewer children they tend to have. The Earth's carrying capacity is certainly limited; but a slide into backwardness would probably increase our problems in this regard.

● His unwillingness to weigh the advantages of economic growth and technological innovation against their disadvantages is perverse. Progress may have many unpalatable side effects, but it is not this vile. Think of literacy. Even "consumerism," the desire for beautiful or useful objects, may have something to do with human dignity. Lasch's lopsided assessment is especially exasperating since he repeatedly warns us that, when it comes to tribal loyalties, religious superstitions, and martial virtues, we must not let the bad blind us to the good.

● His criticism of nostalgia and the pastoral tradition, while a clever ploy, is theoretically unconvincing. Despite Lasch's emphasis on endangered crafts and the dignity of labor, his thinking remains more infected by backward-looking communitarian platitudes than he would have us believe.

● His sympathy with "cultural pluralism" and his doubts about "the assimilationist ideal" remain nebulous in their implications. But it sometimes seems that he would favor turning America into an ethnically diverse collection of internally homogeneous subunits. That this is an ill-considered idea is the least that might be said. Strong-group pluralism would be tolerable only in the context of a *liberal* system capable of protecting individual rights and fostering national discussion and cross-ethnic cooperation. Yet that is precisely the kind of system that he purports to distrust.

● His suggestion that fanaticism, intolerance, and superstition are a price worth paying to avoid flabbiness, insipidity, and spiritual desiccation is far-fetched. Only an affluent American could write this way. Only a Westerner could dismiss (and even then one wonders how) the problems of disease, famine, poverty, and violence as an obsession of the decadent liberal mind. And, in a world full of Tamils and Sinhalese, Serbs and Croatians, Israelis and Palestinians, Northern Irish Catholics and Northern Irish Protestants, only an American could become larmoyant about the weakening of tribal loyalties and ethnic identifications.

In the end, Lasch's moral perspective is afflicted with deep and irresolvable inconsistencies. It sometimes seems as if the communication lines among his various chapters have been cut. In retrospect, we can see that he condemns "the progressive mind" on the basis of four wholly distinct traditions or ideals: martial, religious, ethnic, and artisanal/proprietary. The relations among these four value-clusters are never explained or even discussed. But the tensions among them are obvious. Consider Lasch's simultaneous praise of the meek and the bold. Did progress destroy dauntless heroism or passive acquiescence? Has the economy of abundance dampened "virility" or shattered "grateful acceptance"? Does mankind need a "taste of battle" or a renewed sense of "sin"? That he draws equally on Georges Sorel and Jonathan Edwards reveals the breadth of his sympathies, not to mention the disheveled eclecticism of his mind.

Lasch's oscillation between religious and heroic perspectives contributes to the length, but not to the clarity, of his book. He sometimes defines virtue as self-abnegation and sometimes as self-affirmation. In one chapter he tells us to submit passively to the universe. In the next he urges us to adopt a "heroic conception of life." We must strive for self-sufficiency, he says, and also accept our totally helpless dependence on a higher power. The Emersonian ideal of self-reliance is noble; the struggle for human autonomy reflected in modern science is base. We must seize back the "control" of our own lives wrested away by capitalism and also admit that the desire for "control" is blasphemous and even satanic. We must throw off wage

In the Midwest

He saw the iron wings of daybreak struggling
to rise over the warehouses stacked along the river.

Rotting wharves and bulkheads. Dead tracks
leading to railroad yards on the edge of nowhere,

the sun toiling in gray smoke on the horizon.
As if God had crumbled bits of charcoal

in the air and dusted the earth with ashes—
Eyelids of silt, thou shalt not open!

Scourge of asphalt and carbon, of slag heaps
and oil-stained piers, of soot and smog. . . .

He was not a real prophet, I suppose,
not the biblical kind, like Habakkuk or Amos,

and yet he wandered through the heartland alone
and saw the shattered spine of a bridge

collapsing in Gary; he saw the ruined breath
and gaping windows of a factory choking

in Youngstown; he saw the stench of history
seeping out of Sandusky and Calumet City. . . .

Stops on the highway, stains on a dark map.
Foundries, industrial waste. Stripped quarries,

stripped land, what we've done to the sky
curdling over two drunks sleeping on an embankment

and waking up to a late day in the empire.
He kept speaking of Byzantium, of Constantinople.

He saw gulls feasting on garbage.
He saw the gouged bodies of the unborn.

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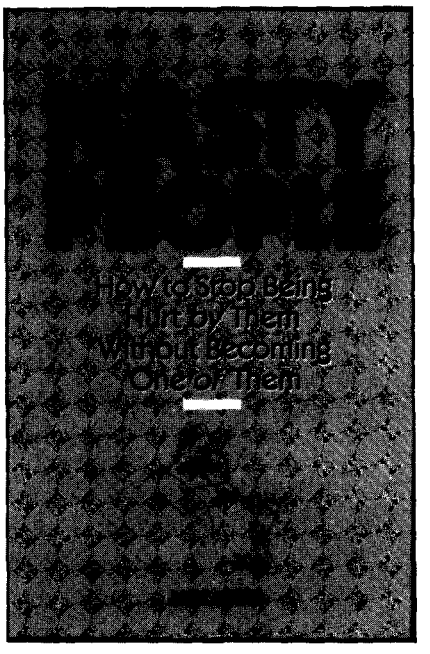

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slavery while embracing mortality and pain, the wages of sin. We must honor both limits and the heroes who audaciously transgress them. This whipsaw pattern is easier to identify than to understand.

What would a politics of limits actually look like? What concrete alternatives, in other words, does Lasch propose? He tells us to adopt "a tragic sense of life," but he has no practical suggestions about how to democratize work or to revivify ethnic passions. At one point he remarks that we ought to "try to transform the ghetto into a real community," but he is naturally silent about how this alchemy is to proceed. He believes that "a drastic reduction of the standard of living enjoyed by the rich nations and the privileged classes" is inevitable, but he doesn't tell us how to get there with the least (or the most?) possible pain. He detests large corporations, financial institutions, and national and state bureaucracies, but he doesn't explain how we could cope with the consequences of abolishing them or how they might be replaced.

A brief autobiographical chapter is titled "The Making of a Malcontent," no irony intended. But disaffection is one thing, legal implementation another. Does Lasch want to punish disloyalty and disbelief? Does he favor a *less* equitable distribution of consumer goods? Is all criticism of authority to be suppressed? Would he ban interracial marriage, prohibit social mobility, and make contraception illegal? Should television sets and credit cards be confiscated and kerosened? Must we revert to small-scale production and abolish paper money? Should all central heaters and air conditioners be shut down?

In every case, surely, the answer is no. But what, then, is the upshot of these ruminations? Lasch's concluding statement is disappointingly academic: "The populist tradition offers no panacea for all the ills that afflict the modern world. It asks the right questions, but it does not provide a ready-made set of answers." He is so reticent here that he doesn't even tell us what these "right questions" might be. Still, his evasiveness is easy to understand. Answering questions, solving problems, curing ills—those are dangerous activities. They might make things better than they are. They might even threaten to improve our lives. Just imagine people taking the lesson of this book to heart. They might suddenly acknowledge that material abundance is not humanity's greatest good. They might even try to resurrect tribal connections and bygone crafts. If so, shouldn't we applaud the moral advance? Lasch concludes with the usual swirl of demurrers, to distract us, I think, from the ultimate paradox of his approach. For what does this bitter enemy of improvement have to offer but a renewed, if hopelessly vague, dream of further progress for mankind?

STEPHEN HOLMES is professor of political science and law at the University of Chicago.

The Man Who Presumed

BY CHRISTOPHER HOPE

Dark Safari: The Life Behind the Legend of Henry Morton Stanley by John Bierman

(Knopf, 402 pp., $24.95)

Henry Morton Stanley, as every schoolchild used to know, was the American journalist who discovered the African explorer David Livingstone, who was lost in "darkest Africa." On November 3, 1871, he greeted Livingstone with that stupendous understatement: "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

In fact, Henry Morton Stanley was never what he seemed. For a start, he was not even Henry Morton Stanley. He was someone who made himself up as he went along. He was, in the piquant phrase of John Bierman, his latest and best biographer, "a self-invented man." He became one of the greatest African explorers, a rival even to Livingstone, by dint of ferocious effort and a complete inability to tell the truth. He was a man in love with his own lies, and he lived his life in revised versions. As Bierman shows in this utterly absorbing dissection of the Stanley phenomenon, the life of the man outstrips the legend. This is surely the best and fullest account of the monster who loved uniforms, guns, fame, and women—and failed to achieve, at least to his own satisfaction, true success in any of these loves.

He was also a magnificent example of the Victorian virtue of self-improvement. He was extraordinarily brave and sickeningly brutal, cutting great swathes through the African continent, leaving behind him the dead and the impressed. He moved with what he once called "railway celerity." (It should be remembered that in the mid-nineteenth century there was no finer metaphor for swift, ironclad progress.) Once set on a course—whether determined to be the first man to discover the famed Dr. Livingstone (who in the opinion of his friends did not wish to be found at all), or hunting down a vanished Pasha (who did want to be found but then refused to come home after all), or carving out, in what is now Zaire and was then the Congo, a great Free State at the behest of King Leopold of the Belgians—Stanley was unstoppable. Watching him dynamite his way through the African bush on his Belgian adventure, his awestruck native servants dubbed him "Bula Matari," or "The Smasher of Rocks."

He was born on January 28, 1841, the illegitimate child of a Welsh housemaid and the village drunk. His name was entered in the records of the little Welsh town of Denbigh as "John Rowlands, Bastard." All his life John Rowlands struggled to escape the stigma attached to his birth. Abandoned by his mother and rejected by his family, worse was to come. The boy was sent away to the workhouse, a place of confinement as cold as the public charity on which it was founded.

Although Bierman doubts that the place could have been as hideously awful as Stanley painted it in his memoirs, the man himself recalled it as "a house of slow death" in which boys and girls were mixed with the aged, the derelict, and the defeated poor. In this place the 5-year-old boy was abandoned. Stanley's late and very dark recollections of his abandonment owe much, Bierman contends, to Dickens. Indeed, they may; but surely Stanley did not need Dickens to teach him the meaning of utter desolation. The boy was taken to this place by a relative who pretended to be delivering him into the care of an aunt in a nearby village, only to have the boy suddenly and savagely imprisoned. Stanley recalled the moment in his memoirs:

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A somber-faced stranger appeared at the door who, despite my remonstrances, seized me by the hand and drew me within, while Dick tried to soothe my fears with glib promises that he was going to bring Aunt Mary to me. The door closed on him and, with the echoing sound, I experienced for the first time the awful feeling of utter desolateness.

The boy survived the workhouse. Indeed, he became one of its brightest advertisements, and in later life he was not above commending the hard virtues of self-reliance that he had learned. By his own account he escaped at 15, after knocking down the director, a one-armed ex-miner who beat the children regularly and ended his days in a lunatic asylum. Bierman, who has studied the workhouse records, thinks the story of his dramatic departure owes much to Stanley's imagination and, again, to his reading of Dickens. Bierman suggests that the young Rowlands left peacefully to attempt to rejoin his family. Either way, the boy Stanley showed a capacity for impulsive action and a gritty determination to make his way and his fortune, whatever the odds.

When his family rejected him once more, in 1859, at the age of 18, young John Rowlands signed up on a Yankee merchantman bound for New Orleans, where he promptly jumped ship. If ever an immigrant were to make his way in the New World, it was this boy. Young Rowlands was entranced by New Orleans. The Southern sensuous appeal of it, together with the realization that this was indeed an utterly new place filled with people who in no way resembled his British countrymen, profoundly impressed him. Stanley wrote later of the Americans he met: "These people know no master and had no more awe of their employers than they had of their fellow-employees." And in New Orleans Stanley got lucky, for it was there that he met the man whom he later claimed had adopted him, one Henry Hope Stanley, a cotton broker.

Much has been made of this miraculous adoption. Bierman's patient sleuthing shows that, although the two men formed a partnership for a time, Stanley's account of his life with his benefactor had very little basis in fact. Stanley was making it up, just as he was making himself up, as he went along. Long after Stanley had made his name as the man who found Livingstone, the *New Orleans Daily States* interviewed an old lady who remembered the Welsh youngster back in 1859. He was, she told the paper, "smart as a whip and much given to bragging, big talk, and telling stories." As a succinct description of Stanley, it cannot be equaled.

He was also indefatigable in pursuit of the blessed good fortune that seemed always to elude him. But now at least he was in possession of a new name and a new confidence and hungry for everything. Time spent in the swamplands of Arkansas gave him a taste of swamp fever and the time to learn to shoot. As Africa would discover, Stanley was a deadly shot. His time in the South also sharpened his eye for the typical life of the planter: proud, fractious, and liverish. He had nothing but scorn for the increasing bellicosity between the South and the North: "Why a sooty Negro from a distant land should be an element of disturbance between brothers was a puzzle to me."

Puzzle it may have been, but impelled forever onward it did not stop Stanley from enlisting in the Confederate army to prove his love for a Southern belle. Stanley saw action with the Dixie Grays in the ferocious battle of Shiloh in 1862, where he distinguished himself by his extraordinary coolness under fire. At the height of the battle, feeling himself to have been chided for lagging in the face of murderous enemy fire, Stanley moved forward so fast and so far that he found himself behind enemy lines. Captured by the Union troops, he turned coat and prepared to fight his former

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friends. Perhaps luckily for Stanley, dysentery intervened, and when he survived that he was off and moving again with "railway celerity." In 1863 he was in New York working for an attorney. In 1864 he was back in the Civil War as a ship's writer on the frigate *Minnesota*, where he witnessed the successful assault on Fort Fisher.

After the war he was in St. Louis and found a job with the *Missouri Democrat*, where he kicked off his life of exploration with a voyage of 600 miles down the Platte River in a flat-bottomed boat. In 1866, for the sheer thrill of it, he led an expedition to Turkey. Catastrophe befell the party. The explorers were set upon by angry locals and one of its members was raped by Turkish brigands. But before it, and during it, and after it, came the photographs. A short and incorrigibly vain little man, Stanley was forever having himself photographed in new uniforms, many of them of his own design. He had a way of making catastrophe pay. His disastrous Turkish journey took him on to the New York lecture circuit. Though it bombed badly, Stanley's self-advertisement, proudly printed at the time, suggests the strutting style of the man: "The American Traveller, Henry Stanley, who was cruelly robbed by the Turks on September 18, 1866 . . . gave a talk about his narrow escapes and brought the evening to a close by singing a Turkish song à la Turque."

There was no stopping him now. Henry Stanley had found America to be not only the land of opportunity but also the source of bushels of fascinating and salable copy. Everything was grist to his mill, and Stanley would go anywhere to get it, as the editors of papers like the *Democrat* discovered. Later he found a welcome in the purple pages of James Gordon Bennett's *New York Herald*. Did one want an account of the pacification of the Indians? Vignettes of Wild Bill Hickok? Stanley, with his arch, often overbearing prose, "elephantine" in Bierman's word, was the man.

Yet he was capable of moments of startling insight during these early travels. Consider the heart-wrenching declaration of the Kiowa chief, White Bear, known also as Satanta, when faced by white settlers determined to "improve" his country with schools and railways:

> I love the land and the buffalo and will not part with any. . . . I don't want any of these medicine homes [schools] built in the country; I want the papooses brought up just exactly as I am. . . . I don't want to settle [on the reservation]. I love to roam over the wild prairie, and when I do it I feel free and happy, but when we settle we grow pale and die. . . . My heart feels like bursting with sorrow. I have spoken.

There was to follow, almost by way of a taster, Stanley's first visit to Africa. He accompanied General Sir Robert Napier's punitive expedition against Theodore, the "mad" emperor of Abyssinia, filing for Bennett's *Herald*. This now all but forgotten campaign was conducted with brilliant dispatch across almost impassable terrain. It is one of the felicities of Bierman's book that he remains always aware of the colossal self-confidence of the great Victorians. British imperialism in the mid-nineteenth century has about it always a grandeur dizzying to contemplate. Was a distant princeling to be punished for disrespect to Victoria, the queen empress? Well then, let no effort be spared. Facing a landing on the coast of Eritrea, to be followed by a 400-mile march inland, Napier laid his plans:

> An advance party of engineers identified a ramshackle village named Zula standing on an open plain in Annesley Bay, as the ideal point at which to land Napier's army. The derelict settlement had no port facilities so, with typical Victorian bravura, the British built them, with two huge concrete piers, warehouses, lighthouses, and twenty miles of railroad track to facilitate the landing of a mountain of supplies and Napier's 13,000 troops, 20,000 camp followers—including water carriers, prostitutes, and vendors of other creature comforts—and 55,000 draft and pack animals. These included mules, camels, and 44 elephants to carry the artillery in the style of Hannibal crossing the Alps over the invasion route's precipitous mountain passes.

This military extravaganza was transported to Africa in a fleet of no fewer than 280 ships—all this to deal with a bit of foreign difficulty. Napier's expedition was an unqualified success, and so was Stanley's part in it. By a brilliant combination of organization, courage, and judicious bribery, Stanley scooped all his rivals, British and American, and made his name as an outstanding foreign correspondent.

Up until this time he had been plain Henry Stanley. Now he added a middle name, a kind of euphonious, auditory signature that he must have felt gave just the right external ring to his tumultuous inner ambitions. He tried several alternatives, Bierman writes, including Morley, Morelake, Moreland, and settled finally on Morton. Bierman speculates on a certain morbid emphasis on the Latin root for death that he discerns at the heart of the name and, I think, rightly dismisses it. Quite probably there was some deep desire for oblivion in Stanley, but it is more likely that he swung between those two extremes not uncommon among headlong Victorian adventurers, death and glory.

All of this was really no more than a prologue to a swelling theme, mere brilliant and dangerous preparations for the great adventure by which Stanley found the huge celebrity after which he panted. This was the search for the lost missionary David Livingstone. The idea was not Stanley's but Bennett's, who summoned the 28-year-old journalist to a meeting at the Grand Hotel in Paris on October 28, 1869, and came straight to the point. He wished him to find Livingstone if he was alive, and give the *New York Herald* the scoop of the century. Stanley pointed out that the venture would prove expensive and recorded, verbatim, Bennett's reaction: "Draw a thousand pounds now; and when you have gone through that, draw another thousand, and when that is spent draw another thousand, and when you have finished that draw another thousand, and so on; but FIND LIVINGSTONE."

It was an extraordinary commission. To many in England at the time, Livingstone was a faint memory. Reports from Lake Nyasa had reached Zanzibar in 1866 claiming that Livingstone had been killed by hostile natives. Obituaries, factual and showing little sign of sorrow, appeared in British papers in 1867. The same year an expedition funded by the Royal Geographical Society concluded that Livingstone was still alive. But by the following year, reports of his death were again current. It was only in 1869 that a letter arrived in Zanzibar from Livingstone himself and reopened yet again the question of his fate.

By the time Stanley arrived on the island of Zanzibar in 1871, no news had reached the outside world about the sainted doctor for some two years. Despite discouragement from the British consul in Zanzibar, who considered the idea that Livingstone wished to be "found" to be quite absurd, Stanley was not to be denied. The oath he swore at the time signals his determination:

> . . . an oath to be kept while the least hope of life remains in me, not to be tempted to break the resolution I have made, not to give up the search, until I find Livingstone alive, or find his dead body . . . only death can prevent me. But death—not even this; I shall not die, I will not, I cannot die!

Remembering perhaps the meticulous planning of Napier's expedition and trusting, though not always with a happy heart, in Bennett's promise of thousands of pounds to finance his quest, Stanley mounted one of the richest expeditions ever seen in Africa. He bought a million

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beads and twenty miles of cloth and 350 pounds of brass wire for trading with the natives of the interior. In comparison with the thirty-five porters with whom Livingstone had set out in 1866, Bierman estimates that Stanley took 140. Other authorities, including Tim Jeal, perhaps the most levelheaded of Livingstone's biographers, put the number of porters at close to 200.

A month after stepping ashore in Zanzibar, Stanley and his enormous expedition, which included two other white men, neither of whom was to survive the trek, set sail for the African mainland. Once on the march, his progress was phenomenal. Where other explorers had taken five months to reach Unyanyembe, 200 miles east of Lake Tanganyika and 500 miles inland, Stanley covered the distance in just three months, and he did it in the rainy season. He knew he would have to travel a thousand miles to Ujiji, where, best intelligence suggested, Livingstone might be found.

Stanley let nothing and nobody stand in his way. His weapons were the whip and more of the whip, and the gun, and the whip again. His men deserted. They rebelled. They died of fever or were killed by hostile tribesmen, for the country that Stanley was passing through was thick with cannibals. Even more dangerous were the murderous wars being fought between the Arab slavers and the tribes they preyed upon. Among the most valuable qualities of Bierman's book are its constant reminders that Africa existed, to European and Arab, merely to be plundered: Africans were caught between the gun-happy, whip-wielding European explorers and the death-dealing business of the Arab slavers. And despite the efforts of the Anti-Slavery Society in Britain, and the success of the British government in forcing the Sultan of Zanzibar to sign the anti-slavery agreement in 1845, the business was rampant.

When Livingstone arrived in Zanzibar in February 1866, he estimated that somewhere between 80,000 and 100,000 slaves were being dragged from their homes each year and readied for export. The slavers laid waste the land that they pillaged. Livingstone and Stanley constantly came across dead villages, untilled fields, the scattered remnants of depopulated hamlets cowering in the forests. They watched helplessly the lines of chained captives wending their way to the slave ports.

No one fought more fiercely against slavery than Livingstone. He may have been monstrously self-regarding, implacable, choleric, disablingly unforgiving, but it is difficult to think of anyone who did more to bring the trade in human lives to an end. Livingstone believed that somehow his very presence in Africa would put an end to the degradation. Between himself and God, he felt, there was an agreement—together they would put a stop to it. This mattered even more than his dream of finding the source of the Nile River. "The strangest disease I have seen in this country seems really to be broken-heartedness and it attacks free men who have been captured and made slaves."

When Stanley arrived in Ujiji for his momentous meeting with Livingstone, he was, as always, carefully prepared. For his part, though he had no idea who had gone to so much trouble to seek him out, Livingstone knew from the size and splendor of Stanley's entourage that here was "no poor Lazarus like me." Stanley's suit was pressed, his helmet brilliantly white as he stepped forward and uttered the words that have gone down in history. "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" The depths of that understatement may be gauged from the fact that Stanley was the first white man to clap eyes on Livingstone for six years in a country where there were no other Europeans within thousands of miles.

The phrase has been so much mocked that even Bierman feels uncomfortable with it. It was to become the butt of music hall comics and the stuff of cartoons. It has been used to name a piece of jazz, a cocktail, a Victorian fashion boutique, and a discotheque. What is sure is that Livingstone felt anything but amusement. Despite Stanley's fears about the meeting, and the rumors of Livingstone's intense dislike of European busybodies dashing about the African bush, the two men took to each other at once. And Stanley showed no unseemly haste about leaving. They stayed together for five months, from November to April. The two men were useful to each other. If Livingstone made Stanley's name, he was not above using the dangerous columns of the *New York Herald* for a savage attack on slavery. When the two men finally parted, there were tears and declarations of undying affection.

Bierman's embarrassment at Stanley's character is one of the few things about his book that leave me uneasy. One may as well be embarrassed by a forest fire. Even that dread phrase really does no more than testify to the resonance of the four words chosen, once heard never forgotten, and to Stanley's perfect genius for publicity. What mattered about Stanley was not his endless self-aggrandizement, but his unshakable belief that you got

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through life, just as you got through Africa, by breaking the heads of those who stood in your way.

Much the same thing applies to Stanley's technicolor racial views. His mixture of brutality and patronizing morality enraged liberal missionaries back in England as reports of his methods began to reach the public. Stanley, quite literally, stuck to his guns. In a fine retort, which Bierman does not give, Stanley told the accusing missionaries that he would offer them "seven tons of bibles, four tons of prayer books, any number of surplices, and a church organ into the bargain" if they could advance swiftly through the African bush "without chucking some of those bibles at some of those negroes' heads." These attitudes, of course, reflected widely prevalent notions of African inferiority. It is interesting to compare Livingstone's beliefs: "I have no prejudice against their color, anyone who lives among them forgets they are black and feels they are just fellow men." In fact, Livingstone went on to prefer the company of his African friends to the "assistance" of his colleagues at the Anthropological Society in London.

In Europe the discoverer of Livingstone ran into such a chorus of abuse and denigration that he must have thought nostalgically of facing the poisoned arrows of hostile tribes. Large sections of the British press at first simply refused to believe that Stanley had found Livingstone. When proof was provided in the form of Livingstone's journal, and its authenticity was verified beyond doubt, recognition of his achievement was grudging. The Royal Geographical Society went so far as to suggest that Livingstone had cooperated in Stanley's "discovery." The real trouble was that they saw him as an upstart, bigheaded, Yankee adventurer who had had the gall to beat the British at their own game. Queen Victoria, it is true, presented him with a gold snuffbox, but she too put the boot in later, describing him as "a determined, ugly little man—with a strong American twang."

Though the success of his book, *How I Found Livingstone*, made him a wealthy man, it was downhill all the way. On his return from his Livingstone expedition he looked, said a contemporary, as if he had aged twenty years. From then on Stanley returned to Africa time and again. The *Tribune* dispatched him to cover a British punitive expedition against the Ashanti in 1873. During his expedition to Africa in 1874, his hair turned white and fever almost killed him. The buccaneering nature of these expeditions also became more pro-

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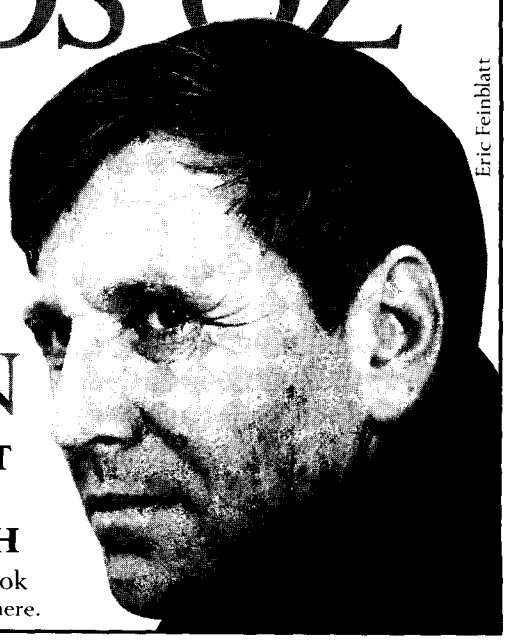

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nounced. Consider his boast during his Central African expedition intended to trace the course of the Congo River to its source:

> [I] attacked and destroyed 28 large towns and three or four score villages, fought 32 battles on land and water, contended with 52 Falls and Rapids, constructed 30 miles of tramways through Forests, hauled our canoes and boat up a mountain 1500 feet high, then over mountains 6 miles, then lowered them down the slope to the river . . . [and] obtained as booty in wars over $50,000 worth of ivory.

Stanley's last expedition was his worst. He set out to create a new country, the Congo Free State, which was to be drained to its lees by the Belgians. The Congo Free State was an unrestrained exercise in murder, rapine, and violence. The lash, which was usually serrated hippopotamus hide, was an everyday instrument of torture. Executions were summary. Women were punished by having their breasts cut off and being left to die. Stanley condemned these excesses, but he could do so only from distant retirement in England. Frank Harris, a wonderfully acute observer of the follies of imperial adventurism in Africa, remarked of Stanley that he was "a force without a conscience."

Stanley personified, then, the white man's assault upon Africa. It has been an effect both momentous and lamentable. Africa existed in the European mind as an overheated fantasy, as the Dark Continent. In truth, the darkness lay in the minds of those who traveled with whip, slaving chains, and rifles, burning, pillaging, and destroying, all the time insisting, and believing, that this was progress.

Certainly it might be said that whatever Stanley accomplished in Africa, it was Africa that left its mark on Stanley in the end. He plundered it with a will and, in return, it never left him alone. After numerous unlucky loves, Stanley finally married Dorothy Tennant in a happy, probably platonic, union that endured until his death in 1904. His wife felt nothing but bitterness for what she called "the country that has taken so much of his splendid vitality." The plain fact is that Stanley needed Africa far more than it ever needed him. In his biographer, at least, he has been fortunate. This is a magnificent and appalling Victorian life. Bierman knows him to have been "a bully, a braggart, a hypocrite, and a liar," but he recognizes, he even celebrates, the achievements of this haunted man.

CHRISTOPHER HOPE is the author most recently of *Moscow! Moscow!* (Heinemann).

The Compleat Poet-Critic

BY WILLIAM PRITCHARD

Under Briggflatts: A History of Poetry in Great Britain, 1960-1988 by Donald Davie

(University of Chicago Press, 262 pp., $24.95)

Collected Poems by Donald Davie

(University of Chicago Press, 480 pp., $40, $14.95 paper)

Now approaching his seventieth year, Donald Davie, who was once designated by Christopher Ricks as "the best literary critic in the post-Eliot-Leavis-Empson world," has retired from a distinguished career as a university teacher and simplified his Anglo-American loyalties by becoming a permanent resident of England. As a writer, however, he is as active as ever (in addition to the two listed above, a third book, *Slavic Excursions: Essays on Russian and Polish Literature*, was also published last year).

Davie has said of Leavis's style that its "difficulty" and "corrugation" gave Leavis's criticism both substance and savor. What gives Davie's criticism its peculiar substance and savor may be glimpsed in two related passages about the art of poetry. In the first (from his essay "English and American in *Briggflatts*," which appeared in 1977), Davie attempts to account for the neglect that Basil Bunting's long poem has suffered at the hands of English readers. It is a sad fact, he observes, that such readers of contemporary poetry,

> few as they are, and perhaps just *because* they are so few—have got used to being cajoled and coaxed, at all events sedulously *attended to*, by their poets. Teachers in English classrooms have for decades now persuaded schoolchildren and students to conceive of the reading of a poem as a matter of responding to nudges that the poet, on this showing debased into a rhetorician, is supposedly at every point administering to them.

The second passage occurs in his new book *Under Briggflatts*. (Does he mean that poets write under the aegis of Bunting's poem, or that the poem towers above all other poetry written during the past thirty years?) Davie writes of how Thom Gunn's poems in *Moly* frustrate readers who want to be "spurred into feeling," since Gunn's meters and rhymes draw attention to themselves:

> The art that refuses to conceal itself runs an insurmountable wire fence between itself and the reader; the reader may look through the wire mesh, but he cannot join in, except by the exercise of a sympathetic imagination. . . . And that is an affront that the reader finds too gross to stomach, if he has been schooled in a rhetorical theory of literature so as to think that the writer's prime duty is to him, the reader, rather than to the writer's own experience, his own subject. Conceiving of poetry as a service industry, such a reader expects *service*. . . .

Both passages involve a principled criticism of certain ways of reading and writing, by comparison with other, more admirable ways. Besides the lively and opinionated presence of its author, what holds *Under Briggflatts* together is its aim to celebrate some recent British poets who refuse to conceive of poetry as a "service industry," insisting instead on a more austere relation to their readers and on realizing a "subject," rather than charming and disarming through rhetorical guile. As Davie puts it, the poem is (or should be) a "transaction between the poet and his subject more than it is a transaction between the poet and his readers."

The distinction is an important one, partly because it impinges on the way Davie, as a literary historian, views the recent scene. He distinguishes, usefully, between poets who have a "public" and those who merely have a "following"; and he proposes, convincingly, that of recent British poets only Ted Hughes, Philip Larkin, and the Irish Seamus Heaney can be said to have a public. Yet on the evidence of those writers whose works are most admiringly explored in the volume to hand, it is poets with a mere following who most interest Davie.

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Of these, the most prominent are Charles Tomlinson, C. H. Sisson, and Basil Bunting. As is usually the case with Davie's critical writing, this is no impartial survey of the field conducted on the old-time advice that if you can't say something nice about a person or poet, don't say anything at all.

Davie claims, in his foreword, that there is a difference between literary history and criticism, and that the main function of literary history is commemorative. Thus it is more indulgent than criticism need be toward the writers it is concerned to preserve: "It is more anxious to ensure that no deserving name falls out of the historical record, than to make sure that undeserving ones do not creep in." This distinction between history and criticism seems plausible enough, though in practice the activities overlap and mingle. Davie admits that his book "seeks to promote certain British authors as, however modestly, canonical," and that he does this "on the understanding that such judgments are disputable and ought to be disputed."

I shall be doing some disputing before long, but first I want to describe the kind of historian that Davie is in practice. Consider, by contrast, the practice of an academic American literary historian like David Perkins, whose second volume of *A History of Modern Poetry*, which appeared in 1987, deals with postwar British and American poets. Perkins's way is to parcel out the poets into different groups and schools, to survey individual literary careers, to note outstanding individual volumes and poems. The historian's tone is impartial, sometimes to the point of blandness; he plays few favorites and he makes a fair case for each poet. But Perkins's ideal reader is, I trust, someone who doesn't exist, since this figure is able, calmly and judiciously, to appreciate the most widely different poetic styles and possesses a taste so inclusive that it can happily accommodate, without choking, Kingsley Amis and Allen Ginsberg, Anne Sexton and Charles Olson.

Early in Davie's book he makes it clear that such inclusiveness is not only unusual, but probably undesirable. After comparing two poems about horses, Edwin Muir's "The Horses" and Austin Clarke's "Forget Me Not," Davie points out "the awkward fact" that given poetry so different "no one's taste is, or can be expected to be, so catholic and unprejudiced as to respond to both kinds with equal ardor." Davie's comparative approach tends to have a sharp edge to it, as when he juxtaposes Clarke's "ferocious banter" to that found in Hughes's *Crow*. His conclusion about banter is that, compared with Clarke's truly fierce and comic practice, Hughes's approach typically consists in "setting us up for, and then delivering, a stagey punch line," a practice that masks "a bleeding heart." The judgment seems to me a telling criticism of Hughes's rhetoric, even as it places Davie in the line of those who incline toward judicial criticism.

Of course Davie has always preferred some authors and some poems to others. Did he not once begin a review of Shelley's notebooks by asking, "Wasn't Shelley by and large a rather bad poet?" In *Under Briggflatts* he is capable of similarly enlivening, even disconcerting, surprises. For example, in discussing Gunn's *The Passages of Joy* he notes, in a generally positive account of Gunn's poetry, that the poet's proclaimed homosexuality constitutes an appeal to "experience" as the legitimating test for "what is right." This means, he goes on to argue, that whereas one could detect profound affinities with seventeenth-century English poets in Gunn's earlier *Moly*, his later espousal of "Gay Liberationist" sentiments meant that his sympathies "with any period before the Enlightenment can never have been more than skin deep."

Such a provocative charge borders on sensationalism, or at least on overstatement. It also rouses any reader who might have been dozing. Just how unacademically daring Davie can be is clear when, after positing Gunn's necessary alienation from pre-Enlightenment ("homophobic," in the going jargon) English literature, he takes another unexpected leap, adding: "Of course it could always be maintained that for the sake of achieving objectives so obviously just and overdue [Gay Liberation], the sacrifice of such resonances and continuities was a small price to pay." It *could* be so maintained, and though Davie doesn't exactly maintain it himself, he gives prominence and conclusiveness to the claim.

Davie's procedure is rather like Ezra Pound's. It is not quite the method of "juxtaposition-without-copula" (Pound's prescription for a desirable poetics), since Davie does provide occasional transitional links with and backward glances at his previous remarks. Still, the movement from one writer or topic to the next is extremely, sometimes bewilderingly, rapid. Such allusive discussions hold together only through the energetic, argumentative presence of a superb reader of poetry, exhibiting his responses to a series of different challenges. Unlike a comparably expert critic like Helen Vendler, Davie never "reads" a poem simply for itself; he is never wholly and solely interested in tracing, through patient detail, a particular work's imaginative designs. In fact, he is in the best sense a theoretical critic (or historian), insofar as his special gift is for drawing out and turning around the moral, political, or aesthetic principles raised by this or that poet or poem. As in the discussion of Gunn's continuity with Renaissance values, Davie's study of poetry always has its eye on something more or other than poetry.

At times, however, this idiosyncratic energy feels perverse, or at least eccentric, as when he declares his feelings about the book's presiding figure: "There are those who think that after 1945, the poetry of Bunting is manifestly better than any other poetry in English written in the same period. It is in a class

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of its own. But this was so far from received opinion that it could not be taken seriously." I take it that the "those who think" consist of Davie and a few other readers, while received opinion votes instead for Larkin or Hughes or Heaney.

Davie then goes on to explain Bunting's neglect by proposing that this poet wrote always for the ear, and that "writing with and for the ear had been not just disregarded but positively disapproved of" in Britain. (He further adduces William Empson as "the only responsible voice" raised against such auditory disregard.) I find this unconvincing, even melodramatically so. What were listeners to Dylan Thomas's work listening to? To the poet's voice, surely—but also to the music of the words as it revealed itself. Speaking as an ear reader (the term is Frost's), my own response to *Briggflatts*, no more and no less than to Larkin's "The Whitsun Weddings," Hughes's "The Thought Fox," or Heaney's "Glanmore Sonnets," is first and foremost a response to something heard, different though the music is in each case.

Bunting has insisted that sound rather than meaning is what counts in his poetry, and Davie has directed us to admire, as a kind of standard for British poetry, lines like the following from *Briggflatts* about an ancient battlefield in the Yorkshire dales:

> Grass caught in willow tells the flood's
> height that has subsided;
> Overfalls sketch a ledge to be bared
> tomorrow.
> No angler homes with empty creel though
> mist dims day.
> I hear Aneurin number the dead, his
> nipped voice.
> Slight moon limps after the sun. A closing
> door
> stirs smoke's flow above the grate. Jangle
> to skald, battle, journey; to priest Latin is
> bland.

And so on, in this vein. It seems to me fair to claim, as the critic Peter Dale has, that *Briggflatts* is "tediously dominated by the simple sentence" and so, accordingly, it satisfies the ear that much less.

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There are fine effects in the poem, but it is also open to Samuel Johnson's charge about *Paradise Lost*: "The want of human interest is always felt." (That Johnson was arguably wrong in this judgment is another matter.)

What looks to me like an overvaluation of Bunting, the poet with only a following, goes along with a tendency on Davie's part to cast a slightly baleful eye on the few British poets who, in his judgment, do command a public. In the case of Ted Hughes, I welcome Davie's strictures and would have been a good deal harder on the meretricious *Gaudete* than he cares to be. And his adverse criticism of Heaney is directed less at Heaney's poems than at his "nimble" manipulation of "the poetry market and the poetry reading-circuit." It is with respect to Larkin that the balance seems to me wrongly tipped.

Davie has some very good pages that criticize Larkin's exclusions and inclusions from *The Oxford Book of 20th-Century Verse*, and he neatly points out contradictions between the conception of poetry expressed in some of Larkin's statements about it and his actual practice of it. Yet surely the literary historian should devote some time to holding up for admiration—for commemoration—what he sees as the finest work of one of his most important subjects. In *Thomas Hardy and British Poetry*, Davie provided discerning treatments of Larkin's "The Whitsun Weddings" and "Water," distinguishing their use of landscape from that found in Hardy's poems. There is nothing comparable in the new book, though Davie does drop this curious sentence about Larkin: "The career, as distinct from the poetry (some of which will surely endure), calls out for sensitive and searching study." Why doesn't Larkin's poetry equally call out for such study, and what is the "some of it" that will "surely endure"?

Davie treats Larkin less as a poet than as a portent of the reading public's diminished expectations, or even—because of his great success—as a force to resist. If Larkin wrote a poetry of "lowering apprehensions" (the phrase is John Wain's), Davie cautions that to write in such a "sweetly formal way" and "to set up that way of working as a norm runs the risk of overvaluing a suave melancholy, the poignantly managed dying fall." And he adds: "It is a risk to which admirers of Larkin, that poet of very 'lowering' apprehensions, are particularly prone." Such admirers, then, were unable to appreciate the more impersonal, sterner transactions of Tomlinson or Sisson.

Yet in the process of admonishing us, Davie slightly devalues Larkin; the "suave melancholy" and "poignantly managed dying fall" are presumed to be his stock in trade, and not all that admirable to boot. In 1972 Davie suggested, in one of his sudden bursts of persuasive conviction, that Thomas Gray was "the last serious and greatly gifted poet to practice a rhetorical art," adding that a rhetorical art can be great art and citing Gray's "Elegy" as an example. But even without considering any poets from the intervening years, one can maintain that Larkin, like Gray, is a serious and greatly gifted poet whose finest poems—"Church Going," "The Old Fools," "Aubade"—do manifest a rhetorical art of great beauty that is as much "for the ear" as for the mind or heart. And the want of human interest is never felt.

It doesn't take an Americanophile to make the case that as far as poetry in the second half of this century goes, we have had the best of it—at least as compared with the British. It's also possible that Davie might agree with the sentiment, though our lists of the premier American poets would surely diverge. But the important thing to register is that *Under Briggflatts* contains, in his own words about Samuel Johnson, "page after luminous page" of "sharp and exact delineations of what in one poet's work distinguishes him from all others." One absence, necessary though regrettable, of a significant British poet from the pages of *Under Briggflatts*: Donald Davie himself.

On various occasions I have argued for Davie's insufficiently appreciated talents. He is himself a poet who combines mastery of verse technique with what he once called—in relation to Wordsworth's poetry—"the reek of the human." His new (and third) *Collected Poems* displays the work of forty years. It is a poetic career remarkable for satisfying achievements in various forms and modes, along with a persistently restless dissatisfaction with what he's just achieved—a refusal to settle down into exploiting any particular mode. In the 1950s and early 1960s, in such lyrics as "Woodpigeons at Rahenny," "Heigh-Ho on a Winter Afternoon," and the beautiful "Time Passing, Beloved," he was a pure lyricist of exceptional note. During that same period, in "Remembering the Thirties," "Among Artisans' Houses," and "Hearing Russian Spoken," his critical and satiric eye fixed itself, in a poetry closer to witty argument, on the self in relation to culture, history, language—to "the moral shape of politics," as one of his lines had it.

But as Davie has recently pointed out

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in his foreword to *Slavic Excursions*, the style he had mastered in his first two books of poems had in fact mastered him: the example of Pasternak helped him toward a more "open-ended" style. At that point in his career Davie still wanted to be, he tells us, "a *lyric* poet: an impassioned 'I' who, situating himself in a physical or psychological or mythological landscape, has emotions about it, which he then expresses." His readings of Mickiewicz, Pushkin, and Milosz taught him that "the lyric poet is only one sort of poet," and much of his later career can be seen as consisting of attempts to engage in the more impersonal, sterner "transactions" he admires in Tomlinson and Sisson. This is not to say that he has disdained satiric verse in which he speaks out in the person of Donald Davie, poet ("Six Epistles to Eva Hesse" from 1970 is an example of such verse). But much of the satire, often of a fairly harsh sort, is directed at the poet's self, and I can't help thinking that this inclination coincided roughly with Davie's becoming an Anglican—or rather, as he has written, a member of the Episcopal Church of America.

At any rate, the title poem of *In the Stopping Train* (1977) takes on the burden of administering correction and punishment to its protagonist, a poet who has put everything into his art, to the impoverishment of his life:

> He never needed to see,
> not with his art to help him.
> He never needed to use his
> nose, except for language.
>
> Torment him with his hatreds,
> torment him with his false
> loves. Torment him with time
> that has disclosed their falsehood.

Criticism of the self's pretensions, especially the self-as-poet, is an important motive of Davie's recent volume of religious meditations, *To Scorch or Freeze*:

> I find nothing to say,
> I am heavy as lead.
> I take small satisfaction
> in anything I have said.

God is perceived as shrugging off the poet's attempts at placation and commendation:

> How can he care
> what *billets-doux* we send Him,
> how much we applaud? Such coxcombs
> inclined to commend him!

It is the lament of "a ready writer / who had been writing too long."

But such self-reproach is not the only or even the main motive of the poems (titled "Uncollected Poems") that conclude this collection. There are songs and balladlike pieces that represent as pure a poetry as he has ever written. There are also reminiscences, historical and personal (one wishes that he had provided some notes, since the references are frequently obscure), sometimes with the very moving weight of a life in its later reaches. "A Measured Tread," dedicated to the recently dead Kenneth Millar, begins with a sense of troubled expectancy:

> Walking about the emptied house I
> jangle softly at each heavyish step,
> an old plough-horse, some parts of his
> harness upon him,
> who strays, tired out but happy with that,
> through musky
> honey-shot glooms of a barn where, though
> he
> strays only idly towards it, sweet hay
> will be found in a crib.

Suddenly, in the "Hello Ken" with which the second stanza begins, there is an unlooked for, momentous meeting with the dead.

These are not the sorts of poems that appeal to us through a persuasive rhetoric. They are on the quiet side, often casual and musing in mood and tone; determined to resist large gestures of assent or denial—very un-Yeatsian, though at moments they reminded me of qualities in Yeats's *Last Poems*. Davie's poetry will never command a public. Its knotty, introspective energies, its allusiveness to unfashionable names and places, its refusal of plangent eloquence on behalf of an appealing speaker—all these characteristics ensure that this poet will command only a following. Still, as a member of that following for a good time now, I'd extend Christopher Ricks's claim by proposing that Donald Davie may just be the best English poet-critic of our time.

WILLIAM PRITCHARD is the author most recently of *Randall Jarrell: A Literary Life* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux).

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 6*

vertisers to insist on protecting their own profitability?

In both cases, the decisions are based on a determination of one's probable return on investment. But there is a crucial difference between the advertisers' calculations on this point and those of the networks and affiliate stations: the former pay for airtime in order to sell their products; the latter receive the airtime virtually gratis in the form of government licenses, then sell it for whatever the ad market will bear.

Given the inherently unequal nature of these "investments," it seems far more fair to ask broadcasters to take the temporary financial hit as a concomitant of their public licensure than to expect private companies to squander millions in an attempt to court an understandably unreceptive wartime audience.

DAVID IDEMA
New York, New York

New paradigm

To the editors:

In "The Virtues and the Interests" (February 11), a review of Isaac Kramnick's book *Republicanism and Bourgeois Radicalism: Political Ideology in Late Eighteenth-Century England and America*, Gordon S. Wood argues for the relevance of the "liberal" paradigm in the study of the evolving societies in Eastern Europe. However, I would contend that, in many ways, it is the attributes of the other "paradigm"—classical republicanism—that more clearly define the political motivations of many Eastern Europeans and their political movements today.

The republican paradigm holds that concern for public virtues, a fear of corruption, and the belief in the personal sacrifice of private interests in favor of the public good motivates public political participation and fashions the structures of government. Eastern European society today is very nearly obsessed with concern over corruption and its punishment. Reacting against the traditional motivations for involvement in Communist Party politics (the perks and benefits accruing to a Party member), political participation today is based upon the notion of performing a duty to society. For most people in Czechoslovakia the only acceptable choice for president was Vaclav Havel, someone with no political connections who acted in the best tradition of a man sacrificing private interest for public good. The recent elections in Poland indicate that a political insider such as Tadeusz Mazowiecki, even if he has been an insider for only a short time, is doomed in Eastern European politics.

The relevance of the republican paradigm is further reinforced by the communal values hammered into Eastern European heads for forty-five years. Although in theory everyone is in favor of individual rights and the ability of anyone to become a millionaire, most modern socialist and post-socialist societies cling strongly to the concepts of egalitarianism. There is a lingering suspicion that those "individualists" who succeed are doing so at the expense of everyone else.

BRYAN H. WARD
Columbus, Ohio

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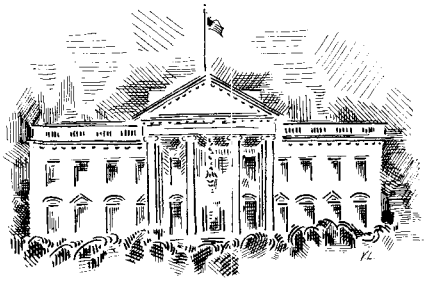
WASHINGTON DIARIST

Spin-offs

ONE OF THE MANY HAPPY CONSEquences of the war's end will be a softening of the market for Operation Desert Storm paraphernalia. Serious collectors will no longer have to elbow their way past crowds of dilettantes to get at T-shirts sporting such patriotic images as the eagle swooping over the "Support the Troops" logo, the map of Iraq leveled by nukes with "That's All Folks" in day-glo pink, and the missile about to rupture Saddam's viscera. I'm giving these a miss—I'm still trying to get some wear out of the contents of my Marion Barry T-shirt drawer—but I do plan to hang on to my Desert Storm trading cards. These are a lot like the baseball cards I used to collect, except instead of pitchers and outfielders they feature Cobra helicopters and AV-8B Harriers. For the philosophically inclined, there are also a few concept cards, such as "Wings over Egypt" and "Preparing to Jump." For connoisseurs of minimalist aesthetics, the "Sunset on the Desert" card shows a large, black, rectangular structure (a radar platform, it says on the back) against a dusky sky. Fortunately the war's brevity will spare us the second wave of souvenirs. No Stormin' Norman lunch boxes, no Pentagon Press Pool water wings, no desert camouflage limited edition BMWs, no Patriots 'n' Scuds breakfast cereal. Watch 'em fight in your own bowl!

THE 1960s—FROM MASS-PRODUCED tie-dye to the new Jim Morrison movie—are a marketing staple of today's instant-nostalgia culture. An especially content-free manifestation of this history-repeated-as-farce has been the Free James Brown movement, a spin-off of the Free Huey Newton and Free Bobby Seale campaigns of twenty-plus years ago. The Godfather of Soul sings great, but he never cut that convincing a figure as a besieged political prisoner. He was, after all, arrested for trying to run over a policeman during a high-speed interstate auto chase while he was on probation for possession of illegal weapons and PCP. But the Free James Brown movement is already more successful than other brave attempts to re-create the era (remember the anti-war movement?). After two years behind bars Brown has now been released, remarking as he returned to domestic life: "I feel good!" (I knew that he would.) He has been deluged with offers to tour the United States and Japan, is planning a comeback concert with M. C. Hammer in July, and boasts that he's at the height of his career. Oliver Stone, we can safely assume, will soon be negotiating for the movie rights.

WHEN THE MEDIA GOT TIRED OF Nixon the evil troll, they made him into Nixon the foreign policy sage. Eisenhower was no longer fun as a clueless bumbler, so he got recast as a foxy schemer who feigned befuddlement to further a progressive agenda. The latest beneficiary of the media need to revise presidential reputations is Jimmy Carter. His ineptitude stopped being newsworthy around 1979, and Reagan's early troubles yielded a spate of "Let's Take Another Look" pieces touting Carter's prescient energy policy, Middle East diplomacy, etc. But that wore thin after a while, too. Then came a new spin: "Let's forget about his tenure as president and focus on what a great *ex*-president he is." In this incarnation he has emerged, somewhat more plausibly, as world peacemaker, hands-on homebuilder, and all-around champion of the downtrodden—a cross between Mahatma Gandhi and Grandpa Walton. Now Carter is being maneuvered into the revisionism danger zone: he's been nominated for a Nobel Prize. The American Friends Service Committee is responsible, praising Carter for spurning "self-serving experience, to devote himself to public service on a global scale." I learned of this nomination the same day I received a thick, glossy press kit plugging an upcoming cable-TV show called "Citizen Carter." Replete with color slides of Jimmy in shirtsleeves, Jimmy and Rosalynn in Tijuana, Jimmy looking contemplative on a mountain in Alaska, the promo touts Carter as one of the "leading philosopher statesmen" of our time. Next stop: post-Nobel *tristesse*.



POP QUIZ: WHAT DO GRAPEFRUIT, Oatmeal, Burnt Orange, and Espresso have in common? If you guessed breakfast in Berkeley, you're close—but wrong. They're all colors of clothes exhibited in the spring Tweed's catalog. This sort of imaginative nomenclature from our mail-order friends has begun to grow irksome. It's one thing to get creative in the name of specificity; I mean, I can see wanting a scarf in French Vanilla instead of plain white. But Calcium? Tundra? *Amish?* "Sky" no longer suffices to modify the blue of the heavens. Tweed's offers a plethora of meteorological and astronomical varieties: Dusk, High Noon, Blue Moon, Planet, Satellite Blue, Universe Blue, Ozone Blue, and the synaesthetic Thunder. (Atmosphere, though, looks purplish, and Cosmos, as best I could determine, seems to represent a red floral pattern.) It is also a little unclear whether it's fashionably correct to wear a tan windbreaker with a scarf of Hermelyn, Breen, or Arugula. Arugula? I always thought that was a Jewish cookie.

"YES, MY FIRST ISSUE ARRIVED and I want my subscription canceled. Your article 'Terms of Internment' did it. I will not subscribe to an anti-Israel, anti-Semitic magazine." This angry letter didn't make it onto our correspondence page. It did, however, achieve the more distinguished honor of a spot on the bulletin board of "the pit," as we reporter-researchers proudly refer to our office area. The pit bulletin board has become home to the most prized letters to the editor and unsolicited manuscripts. Among the gems: the professor who briefed us that his enclosed essay "argues that Marxism comes from the writings of Marx," and the aspiring philosopher who wrote, "I propose in these two ongoing essays to document the history of human evil and human good from its very beginning until the present moment." (Fine, but keep it under 1,200 words.) Perhaps the all-time classic is the writer who informed us that his submission "may well earn a Pulitzer Prize," and listed five addresses where he wanted us to send copies of the magazine after we'd published it. And he added in the postscript: "I am not especially prosperous and would appreciate a sizable check immediately." The problem is, sizable checks are kind of rare around here. How about a couple of Desert Storm T-shirts instead?

DAVID GREENBERG

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WHERE WE STAND

By Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers

America the Multicultural

People often see history as a set of immutable facts and events that took place in the past. But it's really a story we tell ourselves about these facts and events, and we rewrite the story as we get new insights and develop new understanding of the past. This country always has been multicultural: Diverse peoples have been part of it from the beginning. But as long as history focused mainly on the deeds of rulers, it did not tell the story of contributions made by people who never sat in the White House or led an army.

Now, historians also see history in terms of social, cultural, political and economic movements. This gives us a richer and more accurate picture of how our country came to be what it is—not because it excludes what we already knew but because it includes much more. And it will help us to understand and do justice to the multicultural nature of America's history.

But as some people rewrite our history to present the role minorities have played in developing our democratic institutions, other people are saying, "Forget it." These critics insist that the very idea of a history common to all Americans is meaningless and a sham. They say that the only history valid for their children is the history of their own ethnic and cultural group. Supporters often call this approach "multicultural," but "ethnocentric" would describe it more accurately. It excludes instead of including—and it simplifies and distorts the history of our multicultural democracy.

What would a history that does justice to our development as a multicultural society look like? Legal historian Robert Cottrol, writing in the Winter 1990 *American Educator*, offers some straightforward ideas.

As Cottrol sees it, the history of our democracy is the story of democracy's transformation from a great idea into what he calls "the most successful multi-ethnic and multiracial society of our time, perhaps of all time." But, as he points out, this continuing transformation did not take place without a long, painful and sometimes ugly struggle in which minorities played a central role.

The civil rights movement of the 1960s, the most important example of this struggle, is often taught as though it came out of nowhere. In fact, it was the climax of many battles by many people who tried to turn the promises of democracy into realities. The movement began when our history began, with native Americans' resistance to being conquered, and went on to slave uprisings and slave petitions for freedom, which cited the same natural rights our founding fathers invoked. Paul Cuffee's success in 1783 at winning voting rights for the black citizens of Massachusetts was another chapter in the struggle. So were the concerted efforts of Chinese-Americans in the 1800s to use the courts to gain civil rights and the battles for women's suffrage. Jews, who challenged the quotas that denied them access to universities, were part of the struggle, as were Hispanics who challenged school segregation in the 1940s and won.

This struggle to define our democracy still continues, and it will as long as our country does. It also has had a profound influence on the rest of the world because it has helped turn abstract principles like equity, justice, individual rights and equality of opportunity into political movements, laws, programs and institutions—concrete things. And if our children walk away from an American history course without understanding this, the history they have studied is a travesty.

The point of all this is not to get more minorities and more women mentioned in history textbooks. They are already "mentioned" constantly in sidebars and "special features," and pictures are carefully portioned out so each group gets its share. If we take this mechanical and superficial approach to the multicultural and multiracial aspect of American history, we'll never get it right.

And magnifying some figures and events in our history while ignoring or damning others (whether in the name of history that is multicultural or Eurocentric or Afrocentric or some other "centric") will only impoverish our students. All of them need to learn about the lives and political ideals of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln. This is not because they never made any mistakes, but because all our students, no matter what group they belong to, are equal heirs to the ideals of these men and to the nation they helped to create. To say otherwise is to limit and isolate students and deny them their full heritage, as well as to deny them the means to participate in and further democracy.

But we also limit and deny students when we don't give them a chance to learn about Paul Cuffee or Martin Luther King, Jr., or about Lee Yick, who fought for his right to get a license for his business all the way up to the U.S. Supreme Court. These heroes are part of all of our students' legacy, too. As Cottrol says, their stories cannot be "put to one side, reserved for students of some races, but not others, or marginalized as sidebars to American history," because what these people achieved "*is* American history."

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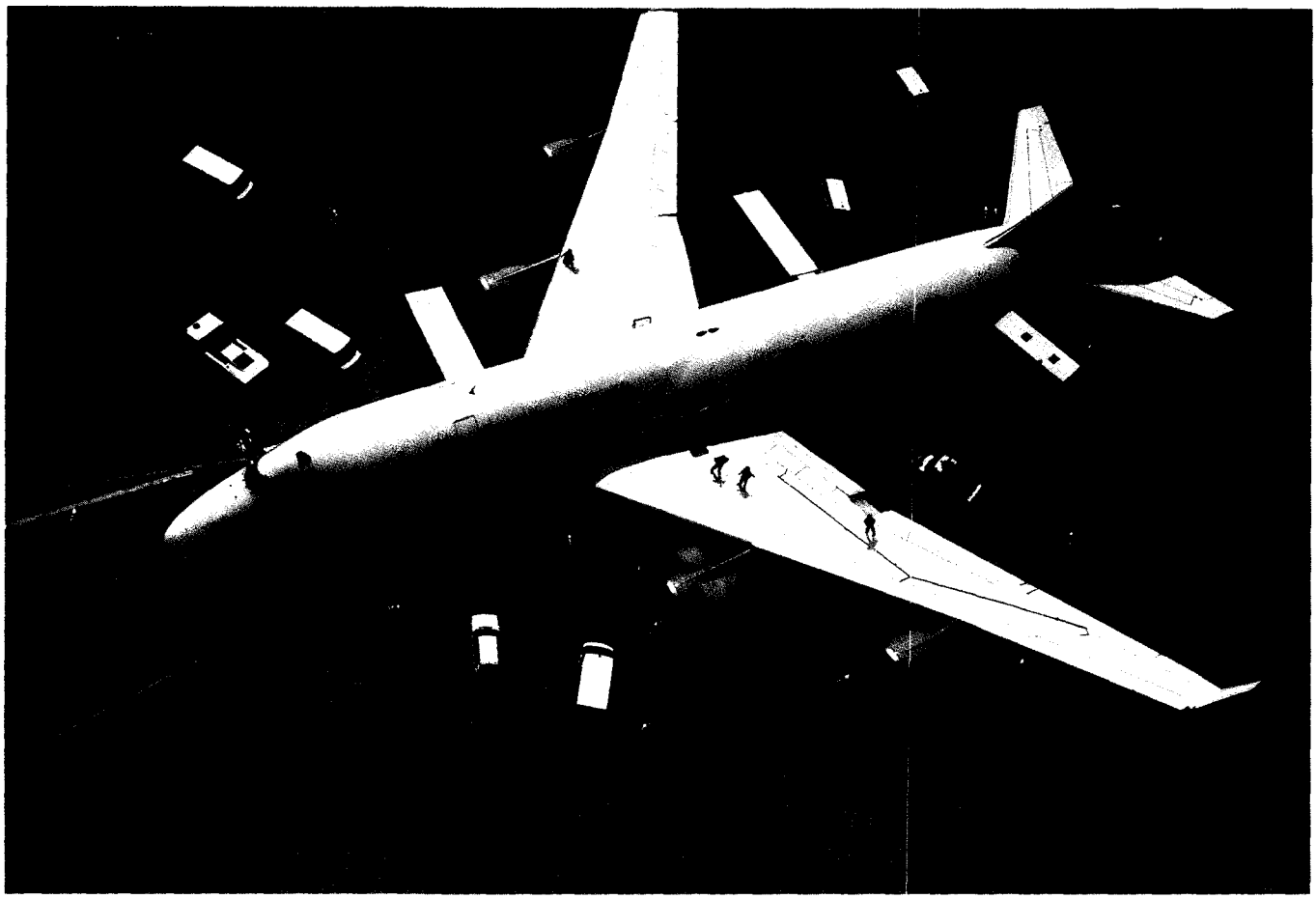

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